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# The Beacon Series

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## STORIES FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

TEACHERS' EDITION WITH HELPER

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# **The Beacon Series**

A GRADED COURSE OF STUDY FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

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## **STORIES FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT**

BY

OLIVER JAY FAIRFIELD

**UNITARIAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL SOCIETY**

**BOSTON, 25 BEACON STREET; CHICAGO, 175 DEARBORN STREET**



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## INTRODUCTION

These stories from the New Testament have been selected and retold for children of about eight years of age, corresponding to the third grade in the schools. The aim has been to select stories suited to the growth and development of children of this age, and to treat them as stories. But in doing so the purpose has not been to make a story-book to be classed as children's literature, but to provide a series of lesson stories that will introduce the child to the kingdom of the good-life, and furnish the "dream stuff" on which the growing mind will be nourished as it comes to a strong and true religious life.

For such a purpose there is no better material than that found in the Bible stories. Not only does the Bible form the basis of the literature and culture of Christendom, but on its stories and teaching the consciousness of our race has been developed and nourished for many generations. About the Bible stories, — whatever may be the theory held in regard to their inspiration, — there clings a certain reverence and awe that is not to be found elsewhere. And as a consequence they have a higher value than other stories for ethical instruction and religious awakening.

For this reason it is urged that stories from the Bible should be made to stand out in the child's mind as something distinct from literature of a day, and as of peculiar value and significance. These chapters should not then be read continuously as a story book, but should be taken up separately, one by one, talked over, retold and mastered as lessons.

The teacher or parent who uses these stories may tell or read them to the children, and after the story has been discussed and analyzed with due care to fix the general run of the story in the minds of the little ones, have one or another of the children repeat the story in his own language while the others listen and make corrections.

Or the stories may be read by the children themselves. But it is believed that the children will read the stories with more in-

terest if the teacher has first told the story in her own words, and one or more of the little ones have had a chance to retell the story in their own way, the others listening and adding corrections.

While the stories have not been told "in words of four letters," it is believed that they will be found sufficiently clear and simple in treatment, and easy to follow, so that children can read them with pleasure. And if explanations seem lacking it is because it was not thought necessary or wise to explain that which the child's mind had not yet begun to inquire about.

O. J. F.

## CONTENTS

I. WHY THE BABY WAS NAMED JOHN . . . . .	1
II. THE CHRISTMAS STORY . . . . .	3
III. THE BIRTH OF JESUS . . . . .	5
IV. WISE MEN FROM THE EAST . . . . .	6
V. THE BOY JESUS IN THE TEMPLE . . . . .	8
VI. A VOICE FROM THE WILDERNESS . . . . .	10
VII. AT THE BOYHOOD HOME . . . . .	12
VIII. JESUS CHOOSING HIS FRIENDS . . . . .	14
IX. AT SCHOOL WITH JESUS AS TEACHER . . . . .	16
X. THE STORY OF THE SOWER . . . . .	18
XI. THE SICK MAN LET DOWN THROUGH THE ROOF . . . . .	20
XII. THE WOMAN THAT WAS A SINNER . . . . .	22
XIII. THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN . . . . .	24
XIV. THE GOOD SAMARITAN . . . . .	25
XV. THE STORY OF THE MONEY . . . . .	27
XVI. THE LOST SON . . . . .	29
XVII. THE GREAT BANQUET . . . . .	31
XVIII. JESUS SENDS OUT HIS FRIENDS TO TEACH . . . . .	33
XIX. WHY SIMON PETER WAS CALLED A ROCK . . . . .	35
XX. ZACCHAEUS WHO CLIMBED A TREE . . . . .	37
XXI. JESUS ENTERING JERUSALEM . . . . .	39
XXII. IN THE TEMPLE AGAIN . . . . .	41
XXIII. JUDAS WHO BETRAYED JESUS . . . . .	43
XXIV. THE WALK TO EMMAUS . . . . .	45
XXV. THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT . . . . .	47
XXVI. AT THE BEAUTIFUL GATE . . . . .	49
XXVII. THE STONING OF STEPHEN . . . . .	51
XXVIII. ON THE HOUSE TOP . . . . .	53
XXIX. HOW PETER GOT OUT OF PRISON . . . . .	55

XXX.	THE LIGHT THAT PAUL SAW . . . . .	57
XXXI.	ON THE ROAD WITH PAUL . . . . .	59
XXXII.	THE GREAT BONFIRE . . . . .	61
XXXIII.	PAUL SAYING GOOD-BYE . . . . .	63
XXXIV.	SHIPWRECKED ON THE WAY TO ROME . . . . .	65
XXXV.	WHO IS THE GREATEST . . . . .	67
XXXVI.	THE DREAM THAT JOHN HAD . . . . .	69

## NEW TESTAMENT STORIES

### I. WHY THE BABY WAS NAMED JOHN

THE New Testament tells about the birth of two baby boys who grew to be great and good. They were named John and Jesus, and they may have been cousins, at least they were very much alike.

I will tell you how the older one came to be called John, for there is an interesting story about it. His father was named Zacharias and his mother's name was Elizabeth. They were both good people, who always did whatever they thought God wanted them to do. And Zacharias was a priest who served in the great and splendid Temple.

They had been married many years, and it was the one sorrow of their lives that they had no children. So when at last a little boy was born to them they were so overcome with joy that the father could not speak, and the cousins and neighbors were glad with them. They were sure the baby would become a good man, too, and perhaps help to make their nation free again.

So when the baby was eight days old he was presented in the Temple to be christened. And the cousins and neighbors supposed he would be named Zacharias for his good father. But Zacharias shook his head and motioned for a pen and wrote, "His name is John."

Every one was surprised, for he had no relation of that name. Then Zacharias regained his voice and told how in a dream it had been told him by an angel that he was to have a son and he was to be named John, and that he should be a guide to those whose lives were dark with sin and overshadowed with death, to lead their steps in the way of peace.

So all the neighbors and friends were astonished, and through all the hill country of Judea the story spread of the baby boy that was born to Zacharias and Elizabeth and named John; and people wondered what the child's future should be.

Read in your Bibles, Luke i. 76-80, a little poem about John which calls him the Dawn or the Dayspring, the first light of day, and which tells how he grew in strength and in grace and in goodness, and that he lived a quiet life in the desert region until the time came for him to tell his message to the people.

## II. THE CHRISTMAS STORY

THE nation in which Jesus lived had once been very prosperous and very proud.

The country was wonderfully beautiful, with great mountains to the north covered with magnificent trees of cedar and fir, and far to the south another mountain range still more wild and sublime. To the west was the blue Mediterranean Sea dotted with ships; while to the east the sun rose over the high plains in the horizon and shone down on Galilee with its pretty lake and the river Jordan, and in a deep pocket of the earth the strange salt sea.

And this beautiful country was very fruitful, so that the people were happy. They had strong kings and wise lawgivers and great poets.

But after a time all this changed. Armies came from Babylon or from Egypt and laid their homes waste and carried many of the people away as prisoners. And they had no strong kings and no great poets except a few who made sad songs of sorrow. And all the people were sad when they thought of their past greatness.

But during all this time there was one thought that cheered them and brought them hope. It was something the great poet-prophets of the past had said of a wonderful king who was to be born among them and bring joy to all the people.

When the times were darkest, then this hope seemed to be the one ray of light to brighten their existence, and they whispered it to one another as they met, and taught it to their children, and it made them glad.

And now after they had waited many, many years they felt in their hearts that this hope that had cheered them so long was soon to be fulfilled, and that there would be a child born among them who would bring back the lost glory to their nation and fill the world with righteousness and peace.

So when Jesus was born in Bethlehem there were in the same country shepherds on the hillsides watching their sheep by



night. And as they watched and perhaps talked together of the hope that stirred and warmed their hearts it seemed to them that a band of angels were with them, and one of them was saying: Behold, I bring good news of a great joy to you and to all the people: for there has been born to you to-day in the city of David a Savior who is Christ and Master. And this shall be the sign by which you shall know him. You shall find a baby lying, wrapped up, in a manger.

Then all in a moment there was with the angel a great number of the heavenly host praising God and saying: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Then the shepherds made haste and went quickly into Bethlehem and found Joseph and Mary and the little boy Jesus lying in a manger in the stable, as the angel had said.

And they were glad and told the story of the angels appearing to them. And all rejoiced together in the thought that at last the great hope of their nation for a wonderful king had begun to be fulfilled, and that its glory had been shown to them.

### III. THE BIRTH OF JESUS

WHOSE birthday do we keep at Christmas time? It is the birthday of a little boy whose life has made the world glad for many, many centuries.

This little boy lived ever so many years ago in a country away off across the seas, and he was ever so poor, but he kept always in his heart the love of God as a Father and of all men as brothers, so that when we think of him we feel that we too are children of God's love. His birthday has given us Christmas with all its gladness and joy.

This little boy was named Jesus, and his mother was Mary and his father Joseph. They did not live at Bethlehem where Jesus was born, but they went there with a great many other people, and when they came to the little town they found all the hotels and houses filled with people, so there was n't any room for them. Where do you suppose they went? Why, into the stable where the great-eyed cattle were. And there in a manger the little baby Jesus was born. The place did not matter, for there was joy in the mother's heart as she looked into the bright baby eyes.

When Jesus was about a week old he was brought into the Temple to be presented there, much as we christen babies and present them at church for God's blessing and guidance as showing that we all came from God and belong to Him.

When the baby Jesus was presented in the Temple there was present two saintly people, Simeon and Anna, worshipping there; and they hailed him with joy as one who was to bring redemption to Israel. He was to be "Emmanuel," which means "God with us," come here to dwell. So all happy births should be.

"Still the angels sing on high,  
Still the bearded men draw nigh,  
Bringing worship with the morn,  
When a little child is born;  
Baby-glory in the place,  
Star-look on the mother's face  
Psalm within the mother's heart —  
Christmas all in counterpart!  
Come to say, 'Since time began  
Son of God is son of man.'"

W. C. GANNETT.

#### IV. THE WISE MEN FROM THE EAST

IN those old days, long, long ago, the people watched the stars a great deal as they lived much out of doors. Sometimes as they looked up into the sky at night and saw the stars twinkling at them so beautifully and wistfully, they felt that the stars had messages for them and they tried the more to understand them. Sometimes they called the stars the thoughts of God, and felt that they could read from them what was to happen upon the earth. Those who studied the stars most were called magi or wise men. Three of the wise men from the east, studying the stars, saw in the west a new star that they took to mean that there was to be born in Judea the king for whom the whole people had been waiting so long. So they made ready to go to welcome him, and went on their camels across the desert country, bringing gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh, — presents such as they would give to a truly king.

And as they journeyed they were amazed to find that the wonderful star went with them. Have you ever walked out at night after the moon was up and noticed as you went along that the moon was going with you? Well, so it was with this star and the wise men. On their long journey the star they had seen seemed to go with them and to cheer them on the way, and when they saw the star each night they rejoiced for they were sure they would be guided aright.

On their way they stopped at Jerusalem to inquire of king Herod where the new king was that was born King of the Jews. Now king Herod was a bad king, and not only did not know that a new king had been born in Judea, but, if there was, he wanted to find him to put him out of the way. So he inquired where the new king should be born, and sent the wise men on their way toward Bethlehem, having first commanded them to come back and tell him when they had found the young king so that he could go and worship too.

When the wise men, guided by the wonderful star, came to Bethlehem, they found the stable where the baby Jesus lay,

wrapped up, in a manger, with Joseph and Mary near by, and they opened their treasures and presented him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. Gold because he was a king as all of us are kings and princes in God's kingdom; frankincense because he was a son of God as all of us are children of God, and frankincense was used in the Temple to make a fragrant perfume before God; and myrrh because he was a son of man, human as we are, and myrrh, like the bitter human tears we shed, was used in the Temple to make things pure and sweet again.

Then the wise men went away, but they were too wise to go back by way of Jerusalem as wicked king Herod wanted them to do, but they returned home some other way. And when king Herod found that the wise men had mocked him he was very angry. And what awful thing do you suppose wicked king Herod did? He sent and put to death all the little baby boys of Bethlehem and of all that region. So that in almost every house there was a voice heard of weeping and lamentation, — Rachel weeping for her children, because they are gone.

But the little Jesus was not among them for his father had been warned by an angel in a dream, and had taken the young child and his mother by night and had departed into Egypt out of Herod's reach. But soon wicked king Herod died, and Jesus and his parents returned to their own home in Nazareth and lived there.

## V. THE BOY JESUS IN THE TEMPLE

WHEN Jesus was a boy he lived in the little village of Nazareth nestling among the hills of Galilee. Here there was much for an active boy to do, both of work and of play. And we are told that he "grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him."

The country about was very beautiful and had many attractions for him; and in the market place the people of the village gathered for business or recreation, and here could sometimes be seen caravans of merchants, with camels richly loaded, from Egypt or from Damascus, or a company of soldiers from far-away Rome.

But the center of interest was ever at the home. Here he could help his father with the tools, in the long shavings, for his father was the carpenter of the village. He was a man of character and worth who taught his son the carpenter's trade and instructed him in helpful ways.

Inside the home there were brothers and sisters younger than himself whom he could help care for or keep amused while his mother spun the cloth for their little coats or worked about the house. And we may be sure that on the Sabbath day he went with his parents to church and that he enjoyed hearing the minister read from the great Bible, for he knew many chapters of it by heart.

Once every year, in the early spring, his parents went up to Jerusalem to the feast of the passover, a great religious gathering. We may be sure it was a great occasion in the family and that the children looked forward to the time when they would be permitted to take the wonderful journey with their parents. At last, when Jesus was twelve years old, the time came when he was to go up to Jerusalem with his parents.

They made the long journey on foot, as was the custom of the time. Probably a great company of neighbors and friends journeyed with them, so that it was an occasion to be long remembered by the growing boy, — the meals cooked by an

open fire, the sleeping out under the stars at night, the hymns and songs they sang together as they walked along, the scenes by the way, and, best of all, at the end of the journey the magnificent Temple, the venerable house of God, so splendid in beauty, about which so many sacred associations clung.

One incident only of this pilgrimage has been preserved to us, but it is such a precious memory that it was well preserved. It shows what kind of a boy he was and indicates the man.

After the celebrations are over the company of neighbors and friends begin their homeward journey; and in the press and confusion Joseph and Mary cannot find the boy Jesus. But they think he must be somewhere among the crowd, so they continue their journey for a day, and then not finding him they turn back, seeking him.

Where do you suppose he can be? They find him in the Temple among the learned doctors of the law, both hearing them and asking them questions. His mother says, "Thy father and I have sought thee, sorrowing." And Jesus assures them that they should know where to find him, — in the heavenly Father's house. "I must be learning the Father's business."

So the boy Jesus returns with them and was subject to them, as an obedient, willing, loving child. But the incident of the boy in the Temple was one over which the father and mother might dream, as they foresaw great things in store for their son.

## VI. A VOICE FROM THE WILDERNESS

When Jesus had grown to be a man to feel that he must do something for his people that would help them to live better lives. He had said that he great wish was that if he had had more of a good time during his childhood and youth, and if he had worked in any of the important places, with things of great value and interest through his work and mastery as carpenter and so on. "The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts," of things that have been and that are yet to be. And now he wanted to do what he could to make his world better.

About this time there came to the borders of his country a man who told him who began to tell the people that the kingdom of God would not come until they were better. And so he began to say to them, "Repent, turn from your sins, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

So we suppose you are guess who it was. You would be? Some one-somebody of the last come to the world? So some of the people thought who heard him. And when they asked him who he was he was so earnest in what he was preaching that he said to his hearers, "I voice crying in the wilderness." But if we want to know his real name, it was John, the son of Zacharias, whom we have already learned about, and whom some one had called the "Baptizing" or the sign of the new life. While others had waited for the new time to come near their homes, he had gone into the wild desert region to the south of Jerusalem near the Dead Sea where he could be alone in meditation and pray. It was a wild desolate region. His home was a cave in the rock, and for food he ate large grasshoppers, called locusts, that he would chew over from the small, hard wild honey that the bees had put in the holes in the rocks. His clothing was a coarse garment of camel's hair, he had a belt of leather around his waist, and he wore no shoes or sandals.

Altogether he was a very wild-looking man. And when he began to speak, out there beside the river Jordan, and to all people that if they did not live better lives the kingdom of heaven

would not come, the earnestness of his message drew great crowds to hear him. When any would tell him that they were sorry for their sins and really meant to live better lives he took them down to the river and baptized them there, and as they came up out of the water they felt that their sins had been washed away and a new life begun. So they called him John the Baptist, because he believed that people were helped to live a better life by giving such a sign that they were ready for the kingdom.

Among those who went out to hear John preach was Jesus from his home away up in Galilee. He was glad to hear such a splendid call to right living. And when he came to John to be baptized, John looked straight into his clear eyes and saw how good and true he was, and said, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? Jesus said, Let it be so now. And as Jesus came up out of the water, rejoicing in the new life before him, it seemed to John that the spirit of God rested upon him like a dove and that he heard a voice from heaven saying,

“ This is my son, my beloved,  
In whom I delight.”



## VII. AT THE BOYHOOD HOME

AFTER Jesus had been baptized by John the Baptist, he returned in the power of the spirit into Galilee and came to Nazareth. This was his boyhood home. Naturally, the old friends gathered around him to hear about the new prophet who had appeared by the river Jordan and was baptizing so many. And they were the more interested when they learned that Jesus had himself been baptized by John and had begun to preach.

On the following Sabbath day Jesus went to church as he had always done, and many were there thinking that he might speak. The elders handed Jesus the great Bible roll to read the lesson, and he opened it at the passage from the prophet Isaiah that he knew so well by heart, The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to heal the broken hearted, and to proclaim that this is the accepted year of the Lord.

As he handed the book back and took the seat to give the sermon all eyes in the church or synagogue were fixed upon him. And Jesus said, "This very day is this passage fulfilled in your hearing." And he told them that he had come and was ready to give his life to "bring good news to the poor," to "help those who are unhappy," to "comfort all who are sorrowful"; and he went on to tell them what a happy world it would be, — a kingdom of heaven here upon earth, — if every one tried to do God's will and all kept God's love in their hearts.

All who were present were delighted and astonished at the beautiful words that fell from his lips; and they whispered one to another, Is not this Joseph's son? And are not his brothers and sisters here with us? Who would have thought that a carpenter's son could speak so well?

Then Jesus went on to tell them how wrong their lives were, and how at that very moment they were thinking about their own fame and glory rather than the glory of God, and were not trying to live that happy life of which he was telling them.

As the people heard this they became exceedingly angry.

And starting up, they drove Jesus out of the town and took him to the top of the hill on which their town stood, intending to throw him down. But some look of quiet fearlessness and love on the part of Jesus made them let him go as they neared the top of the hill, and Jesus walked away unharmed.

## VIII. JESUS CHOOSING HIS FRIENDS

ONE day as John the Baptist was talking to two of his companions he saw Jesus walking by the river, and said, "There is the Lamb of God." The two companions followed Jesus at a distance, perhaps not knowing whether they should speak to him, but at last Jesus saw them following and invited them to spend the day with him. They soon saw that he was a greater teacher than John the Baptist, and they became his fast friends. One of them, whose name was Andrew, hurried away to find his brother Simon and to bring him to Jesus.

So Jesus began to gather friends about him, to whom he could give his choicest thoughts. Andrew and Simon were fishermen on the beautiful lake of Galilee, and Jesus often taught from their boat while the people were near by on the shore. But soon they sold their fishing boat, for it was true what Jesus said to them, that he would make them fishers of men: that in place of drawing fish into their nets, they should draw men and women into the good life.

Simon had two names, for Jesus soon began to call him Peter which means a rock, for he saw that there was something strong in his character upon which he could build as upon a rock.

Another of Jesus' friends was Philip whom Jesus asked to follow him. Philip did just what Andrew had done, — hurried away to find his brother to have him enjoy knowing Jesus too. For that is the way with all our best things, we can't enjoy them alone, but they seem better when we share them with some one whom we love. So Andrew finds Nathanael. When Nathanael had been with Jesus a little while he exclaims, Teacher, you are the son of God, you are King of Israel. And Jesus says, You'll see greater things yet. Believe me, you shall all see heaven wide open, and the angels in every life.

Perhaps it was because these friends could see the good so readily and were so enthusiastic that Jesus chose them as the ones to whom he could talk most freely.

There were twelve of these close friends who were always

with Jesus. They were called Disciples. But there were also a good many friends who came only part of the time. There was one man named Nicodemus who came only at night, because he did not want people to know that he had been with Jesus. Naturally Jesus did not think much of a man who was such a coward as that, afraid to stand for what is right, and he told him he would have to be born again before he could even see the kingdom of God. And Nicodemus wondered how he could ever become a baby again at his mother's knee! But Jesus meant that he must become like a child in his eagerness for the best life within his heart, and not be afraid to do what he thought was right. Jesus wanted friends who would go through life with eyes wide open with wonder at the wealth and glory of the life that is possible for us, and who would keep their minds unspoiled and their hearts pure.

## IX. AT SCHOOL WITH JESUS AS TEACHER

WHEREVER Jesus went there was sure to be a great company of people to follow him, for they had learned that he always had something to say that helped them to live better, and when they were with him it was easy to be good. Jesus must have been a wonderful teacher. He had only one subject, and that was how to live better lives; but he taught that lesson in a new way every time so that it continually grew more attractive.

He told them that the life of God within their souls did not come suddenly, but that it grew like the seed sown by the farmer in the spring, or that it was like a grain of mustard seed planted in the garden that grew to be almost a tree so that the birds built nests in its branches; or that it was like the yeast, "leaven," that a woman stirred into her batch of flour until it all became light; or that it was like money that you put out at interest and by and by it has become a fortune.

On one occasion he took a little child as his object lesson and said that the kingdom of heaven was like that child's life, as free, as joyous, as happy, as natural.

He told them to notice the birds in the trees, or the wild lilies of the field, how they grow, — without fretting and without fear. Yet God cares for them and gives them beauty. "Will he not much more care for you and give you inward beauty if you trust him and ask him?"

How delightful it must have been, being "at school" with Jesus as teacher! He studied such interesting things, and in a way they could not forget. The disciples were at school with him learning about the heavenly truth. You know the word "disciple" simply means a learner, a pupil. They walked the fields and hillsides, or streets and market places, with him and learned the highest knowledge.

And their schoolhouse was the world, — just "out of doors," — where they learned, taught by him, to see God everywhere; nature everywhere divine, and that "every common bush is aflame with God."

He led them down to the lake and, getting in a boat, taught them from it, while they were seated on the shore looking out over the glittering water.

With him they climbed the mountain, and with the world in beauty about them and the clear sky above them, he taught them that religion is as natural as life; as simple as breathing; as joyous as looking out at the fine landscape. The true life, if they have it, cannot be hid, but it must shine out like a lamp, or show that it is there, like a city set on a hilltop.

He taught them to feel that they themselves were children of God; that it was as natural, as simple, as lovely, to think of God as being their heavenly Father, as it was to speak to an earthly parent or to feel that they were the favored children of nature. And one day, while they were all gathered about him on a mountain-top, he taught them that best of all prayers, the one you know, beginning, "Our Father who art in heaven."

## X. THE STORY OF THE SOWER

ONE day as Jesus was teaching a great company of people on the shore of the lake, they could look off to the hillsides and see the farmers sowing wheat in their fields, just as Jesus was sowing seed grains of truth in the minds of those who heard his words. So Jesus told this story:

One day a sower went out to sow grain in his field. He carried the bag of grain under his arm and scattered it everywhere, as he went along, with his hand. So that some fell in the hard trodden paths and the birds came and ate it up. And some fell on stony ground where the soil was thin, and though this grew up quickly, the hot sun shining on the stones soon dried it up, and since its roots could not run down deep because of the rocks it withered away. And some of the seed fell among the thorns and briers, and these weeds grew up so fast they choked it so that it came to nothing. But some fell on the good ground and this alone came to a good harvest.

Those who heard such a story could not help wondering what kind of soil they had in their hearts and minds for the seed grains of truth that Jesus was all the time sowing in them. Were their hearts hard, like the trodden paths, where evil thoughts came like wild birds and destroyed the good thoughts put there before they had a chance to grow? Or were they weak and shallow, like stony ground; did they begin well at first but soon become discouraged, tired of trying to be good? Or were their hearts full of worldly cares and ambitions which grew like weeds and soon choked out their good resolves? Or could it be that theirs was the good soil of true hearts and pure minds that listened well and would bring an abundant harvest of happiness and peace?

Then Jesus added a little story about the harvest. Do men gather grapes from a brier bush, or do they look for a grapevine? Or when they want figs can they pick them from thistles, or must they find a fig tree? A good tree bears good fruit, but if the tree is a poor kind it will have poor fruit. And by the

harvest it produces you can tell what was sown in the mind. The seed thoughts grow of themselves like the plants in the garden where first a little blade comes up, then some leaves spread out, and the flowers come, and, at last, the ripe fruit.

“ Kind hearts are the gardens,  
Kind thoughts are the roots,  
Kind words are the flowers,  
Kind deeds are the fruits;  
Love is the sweet sunshine  
That warms into life,  
For only in darkness  
Grow hatred and strife.”



## XL. THE SICK MAN LET DOWN THROUGH THE ROOF

JESUS was so kind and good to those who needed him most, that it seemed he had a special message for the poor and for the sick. He told them that all men are brothers, and that it matters very little whether they are rich or poor, or high or low; but that it does matter whether they do right, or stick to the truth, or keep love in their hearts. And he assured them that the more they need God, the nearer is God's help ready for them. So it is no wonder that Jesus brought health and strength to many of the sick in Palestine, and that there are many wonder stories told of marvelous cures.

Jesus was teaching one day in a house at Capernaum, and so many people wanted to see him that they not only filled the house but crowded all about the open door and windows in their eagerness to hear him. Presently there came four men carrying a cot on which lay a poor man sick with the palsy. They wanted to bring him to Jesus so that Jesus might make him well. But there was such a crowd about that they could not get him near the door. What do you suppose they did?

They went around to the back of the house where there was a stairway leading up to the flat roof. Here the people sometimes slept if the night were warm. The tops of their houses were not very strongly built, so they lifted off part of the roof, and with some ropes they carefully let the sick man down through the roof right in front of where Jesus was! How surprised the people in the house must have been!

The man must have felt that Jesus could make him well, to have had his friends go to so much trouble for him. When Jesus saw the expectant look of appeal in the sick man's eyes, he said to him, "Son, thy sins are forgiven." This made some of the people very indignant at Jesus for saying that; for they said, Who can forgive sins but God only? Is it not wicked for this man to pretend to do what God alone can do?

But Jesus knew what they were whispering one to another,

and wishing to show them that it is God's spirit that is working through him in this cure and in everything he does and in all good deeds, he said to the man sick with the palsy, Arise, take up thy bed, and go to thine own house. To the amazement of every one the man did arise, and take up his cot, and walk away.

## XII. THE WOMAN THAT WAS A SINNER

JESUS was a friend to every one. He was so kind and true that those who really wanted to be good, knew Jesus could help them, and they were not afraid to tell him their troubles. It was like bringing their cares to father or mother, or to a best friend.

One day Jesus was dining at the house of Simon, a proud man of the church. Simon had seen the crowds of people that followed Jesus, and thought it would be a popular thing to do to have Jesus at his house. But he thought more about the honor it would be to him, than of the pleasure he could give to Jesus as his guest. So he forgot to show Jesus all the honors of a guest.

While Jesus sat talking with Simon a woman of the town, who had been a sinner, came in, almost unnoticed, that she might be near Jesus who had helped her to a better life. While she sat there weeping, her hot tears fell on Jesus' dusty feet, and when she noticed it she stooped down and wiped them off with her long, flowing hair, kissing them as she did so. And then she opened an alabaster box of ointment she had brought that was very precious, and poured the fragrant cooling oil it contained over Jesus' feet.

By this time all in the house had noticed her, and Simon frowned fiercely upon her. The woman arose to go, but Jesus detained her, saying, "Simon, I have something I want to tell you." "Please do so, Teacher," said Simon.

Then Jesus said, "There was once a man to whom two people owed money. One owed him five hundred dollars, and the other fifty dollars. And when they could not pay him, for they did not have a thing left, he freely forgave them both their debts. Now, tell me, which one will love him most?"

"I suppose," said Simon, "the one to whom he forgave most, — the one whose debt was largest."

"You are right," said Jesus. Then, pointing to the woman, he said, "Simon, do you see this woman? When I came into

your house you did not offer me water to bathe my feet, but she has washed my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not kiss even my hand in greeting; but she has covered my feet with kisses. You poured no oil on my head, while she has anointed my feet with perfume. Therefore I say to her, that her sins, many as they are, are forgiven, because she has loved so much; but those like you, to whom God has forgiven little, love little."

Then in answer a look of joy in the woman's face that showed she had found a new life, free from sin, he said to her, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

### XIII. THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN

Two men went up to the great Temple or church to say their prayers. One was a pharisee, a good churchman, who made much of his profession of religion. The other was a plain business man, a publican, whose duty it was to collect the taxes that far-a-way Rome made the people pay; and the people did not like him because of his business as they thought he could not be honest. But in the church the good churchman and the plain business man should both feel at home, for the church is God's house and they were both children of God and could pray to him as Our Father and ask Him to make them better.

But the pharisee acted as though the church belonged to him rather than to God, and he made his prayer to the people about him, so I think his prayer did not serve to make him better. He looked out for a place in the Temple where everybody could see him, and then folding his fine silk garment about him he lifted his proud face toward heaven, and spoke with a loud voice so that every one could hear. And this was his prayer, O God, I thank thee that I am not sinful like other people; or even like that poor publican over there! I fast twice in the week and I give a tenth of everything I get to God.

This was very good of him, and in fact was more than anybody could expect of him, and he should have been glad that he could do so much for the church and for God in place of feeling better than other people for doing so.

But the plain business man, the publican, did not go to church to show his clothes or to let people know how good he was. He went to commune with Our Father and to receive His blessing. So he dropped down in a quiet corner where he would not be in the way, and he did not venture even to raise his eyes to heaven, for God sees everywhere and knows what is in our heart before we speak it with our lips. So the publican did not make a long prayer but kept striking his breast and saying, "God help a poor sinner like me!"

Our heavenly Father must have heard his prayer and sent him home stronger to do better; while the proud pharisee, who thought only of showing himself to others, went home with his heart as cold and hard as before.

#### XIV. THE GOOD SAMARITAN

A MAN was once going down the long lonely road from Jerusalem to Jericho when in a wild rocky place some robbers rushed upon him and knocked him down and took everything he had away from him, even his coat and cloak, and left him on the ground wounded and half dead. He was in a sad plight, for it was a lonely place and there was no one near to help him.

But by and by it happened that a priest was going down that road. He was busy with his sermon or book of meditation as he went along and when he came to the wounded man he scarcely noticed him. "Poor man! He's nobody I know." And he passed by on the other side of the road so as not to get too close to him.

And after a while there was a Levite, a member of the church, who happened to come along that road, and when he saw the man he stopped and looked at him a moment and said to himself: "He is n't a Levite, — he does n't belong to my church." And he passed by on the other side of the road.

But after a long while there was a Samaritan, a foreigner, traveling along that road, and when he came to the place and saw the man his heart melted at the sight. He went up to him and tenderly bound up his wounds, dressing them with oil and wine, and then put him on his own animal and led him to an inn, and there took care of him until the man began to feel better.

And the next day, as he was leaving, he took out two coins from his purse and gave them to the hotel-keeper saying: "Take good care of him, and if you spend any more than that I'll pay you as I come back this way."

This story of the Good Foreigner was told by Jesus in answer to the question, "Who is my neighbor?" Some of the people when Jesus lived thought they should be kind and neighborly only with good people.

The pharisees called themselves "neighbors." And to a strict pharisee a neighbor was one who belonged to his own

little church or set. He would have nothing to do with any one outside.

Others, a little more kindly, said you should do good to every one of your own race or nation. And that would be enough.

With Jesus a neighbor was any one to whom you could do good. The term was world-wide, — as broad as human need.

Which answer do you like best? Who is your neighbor?

## XV. THE STORY OF THE MONEY

GOD gives us life for us to use it in some good way, and not to keep it covered up.

A long time ago a rich man was going off on a long journey, and he wanted to put his money in some place where it would be safe until his return. So he called his servants and said he would leave it with them. They were to use it as their very own until he came back. He gave five thousand dollars to one, and two thousand to another, and one thousand to a third; dividing it up as he thought each could use it well. Then he went away on his long journey feeling he had done the best he could.

The man who had received the five thousand dollars went at once into business and bought and sold and earned more money with it, and by and by he had made another five thousand dollars.

In the same way the man who had received the two thousand dollars went and earned more money with it until he had made two thousand dollars clear. But the man who had received the one thousand dollars was afraid he would lose it, so he wrapped the money all up carefully and went out and hid it in the ground where nobody could find it.

After a long time the master returned from his journey and settled accounts with his servants. The man who had received the five thousand dollars came with an additional five thousand and said, "Master, you gave me five thousand dollars; see, I have made another five thousand." "Well done," said his master; "you have been faithful with a small sum; now I will put a larger one into your hands, and you can know the joy of being a master."

Then the man who had received the two thousand dollars came up and said, "Master, you intrusted me with two thousand dollars; see, I have made another two thousand." "Well done," said his master; "you have been faithful with a small sum; now I will trust you with a larger one; and you can know the joy your master feels."



The man who had received the one thousand dollars came up and said, "Master, I knew you were a hard man for any one to owe money, so, for fear I should lose any of that you let me have, I went and hid your money in the ground; see, here you have all that belongs to you."

"You lazy, good-for-nothing servant!" said his master. "You knew, did you, that I was a hard man to deal with? You ought then to have put my money in the bank so that when I came back I could have what belongs to me with interest added. Now, take the one thousand away from him and give it to the man who has ten thousand. For those who use what they get shall have more given them till they have an abundance; but those who do not keep what comes to them shall have even what they had taken away from them."

"And as for the useless servant, put him out among those who have nothing."

## XVI. THE LOST SON

AN old man had two sons who lived with him until they were grown up. Then the younger son grew restless of staying at home, and one day said to his father, "Father, won't you give me my share of the property?" So the father divided everything he had between them.

The younger son felt very rich with his new possessions, and as soon as he had got everything together, ready to start, he said good-bye to his father and brother and all his friends, and set off gayly to see the world. He was going to have a good time. He went into a far-away country where no one would know him. There he spent his money in fast living. He had lots of friends about him so long as he had money for a gay time. But before he knew it his money was all gone; his new friends left him, and he found he was among strangers.

What could he do? He had never been used to work, but now he must work or starve, for no one would take him in. So he hired himself out to a farmer, and he sent him into his fields to feed hogs. He felt that was about as low work as any one could do. And he was so hungry that he wished he could eat the husks the pigs were eating. He had fallen almost as low.

But now he had time to think. He thought of all he had done. He thought of his father, and of his father's house. There, even the hired servants had all they wanted to eat, while he, the son, was almost dying of hunger. At last he came to his senses, and said, "I will end this and go back to my father and will say to him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and to your face. I am no longer fit to be called your son; make me as one of your hired servants." So he did just what any son should do when he is sorry for having done wrong: he got up and went to his father.

Would the father love him still? Yes; when he was yet a long way off his father saw him coming, and his heart was touched with pity and forgiveness; and he ran and threw his arms about his neck, and kissed him.

Then the son said, "Father, I have sinned against Heaven and to your face: I am no longer fit to be called your son." But the father turned to his servants and said, "Be quick and fetch a robe, the best in the house, and put it on him; give him a ring for his finger, and shoes for his feet; and bring the calf that has been fattening and kill it and let us eat and be merry; for this son of mine was dead and is come to life; he was lost and is found." So they began merry-making.

Meanwhile the elder son was out in the field at work and had not seen his brother return; and when he came near the house and heard the music and dancing and merry-making, he called one of the servants and asked, "What does all this mean?" And he said, "Your brother has come back, and your father is so glad to have him home again, safe and sound, that he has killed for him the calf that was fattening."

This made him angry and sulky, and he would not go in the house. Then his father came out and begged him to come in. "No," he said to his father, "look at all the years I have been working here for you, and I never did anything you did not want me to do, and yet you never gave me even a kid so that I might have a merry-making with my friends. But no sooner does this son of yours return who has squandered your money in wild living than you have killed for him the calf that was fattening."

"My child," said the father, "you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. Could a father do otherwise than rejoice to have his lost son found? or the dead come to life? And is he not also your brother?"

## XVII. THE GREAT BANQUET

THE good life is a continual feast, but not every one accepts the invitation to it.

A rich man was once giving a great dinner. Not only did he have everything of the best, but he wanted a good company to enjoy the banquet with him. So when the time came for the dinner he sent his trusted servant to tell the invited guests to come as everything was quite ready.

But imagine his surprise when those he had invited began begging to be excused. The first man said to the servant, "I have bought a field and am obliged to go and look at it. I must ask you to consider me excused." The next said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen and I am going to try them. I must ask you to consider me excused." While another said, "I have married a wife and therefore I cannot come."

When the servant came back he told his master all these answers, and the great man was angered, and said to his servant, "Go out at once into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in here the poor and the crippled and the blind and the lame."

So they were all invited and came to the feast, — a great crowd from the streets of the city. And still there was room. And the master of the house said to his servant, "Go out into the country roads and by-ways and make the people come in, so that my house may be filled; for I tell you all that not one of those men who were invited will taste my dinner."

It must have been a strange-looking company when they were all together; and how glad they were to come to the feast. And that they might all feel at ease and each one dressed at his best the great man had a silk robe ready for each one to put on.

And when they were all ready for the dinner, and the great banquet hall was lighted and the tables spread with the good things, the great man who was giving the dinner came in to greet his guests and bid them welcome.

But when he came in he found one man who was so greedy

and careless that he had not stopped to put on the guest robe that the rich man had provided. So the host said to him, "My friend, how is it that you have come in here without the guest robe?" And the man could not say anything.

Then the host said to his attendants, "Tie him hand and foot and put him out-doors in the dark to repent: for though all have been invited, only those can come in to the great banquet who accept the invitation and make ready for it."

## **XVIII. JESUS SENDS OUT HIS FRIENDS TO TEACH**

JESUS went round all the towns and villages of Galilee, teaching in their churches and market places, proclaiming the good news of the good life and helping people to lead better lives.

But when he saw that there were so many people who needed some one to help them, he was sorry for them, and said they were like sheep without a shepherd to guide them, for their own ministers who should have helped them had no message for them. Sometimes it seemed to him that there was a great harvest just ready to be gathered in, but only a few workmen could be found to help.

So he called the twelve friends who had been with him most and sent them out, two by two, as his messengers. "Go first to your own nationality," he said, "and search out the lost sheep of the household of faith, telling them that the kingdom of the good life is already here and possible for them. Do all the good you can. You did not have to pay for what was done for you, so you ought to do all you can for others."

"Do not take a lot of things with you," he said. "You need not take even a penny in your purse, for the people where you visit will be glad to look after all your wants; and a worker is worth his food.

"When you enter a house to stay there give the usual greeting, 'Peace be to this house,' and if they do not want you to stay, your greeting will come back to you. If no one welcomes you or listens to what you say, as you leave that town shake off its dust from your feet as a sign of its blindness and hardness of heart.

"But be careful and do not stir up trouble. Bad men in office will try to put you in prison. I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. So be as wise as serpents to get out of their way, and as harmless as doves. But do not be afraid. Your Father in heaven numbers even the hairs of your head. And as he cares for the sparrows, he will much more care for you.

“The things I have told you here secretly, you are to tell in the open, and what was whispered in your ear is to be proclaimed from the house tops. Remember that it is not you who speak but the spirit of your Father that speaks within you. And those who receive you receive me, and even a cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple shall have its reward.”

So the twelve friends set out to teach the good life, and when they returned they had many stories to tell of people whom they had helped to a better life.

## XIX. WHY SIMON PETER WAS CALLED A ROCK

ONE time Jesus and his twelve friends went away from his own country into the beautiful mountain region at the north of Galilee. Here they were free to enjoy much needed rest and to talk things over, one with another, and to make their plans for the future.

Probably Jesus saw that the proud pharisees and the wicked officers who wished to make money out of the Temple worship would not let him teach the people much longer, and might even put him to death to get him out of the way. But Jesus was not afraid, and here he and his friends were happy together and enjoyed talking over the wonderful thoughts of the good life.

Once Jesus asked his disciples, "Whom do men say that I am?" This was something he had not asked before, for he did not seem to care what men said about him. They answered, "Some say you are the prophet Elijah come to life again, and some call you Isaiah or Jeremiah, some of the great prophet-poets of the past." It was just as if we should say a man was like Washington or Lincoln.

Then Jesus asked his disciples, "But whom do you say that I am?" And Simon, who was always ready to speak up or take the lead, said, "Master, you are the Messiah King! the Son of God whom all our people look for!"

This enthusiastic answer pleased Jesus, and he said, "God bless you, Simon, and I say you are Peter, a rock, the strong of character. And on such a rock as this I will build my church and nothing can harm it."

Simon was quick and impulsive and easily moved: his nature was more like sand than like a rock in character; but he could stand like a rock for the truth when he once saw it, as Jesus well knew. So he called him Peter the rock, and said his church should be a church that should make men live that better life which is possible for them, and should rest upon the fact that men who are weak can grow strong in character and life.



Then Jesus told them that it was his plan to go up to Jerusalem to teach the people there, and that in Jerusalem his enemies would put him to death, but he would rise again. This made his friends very sad, and Peter tried to have him change his plans and said, "Master, that shall never be!" But Jesus said that when Peter talked like that he was more like a stone in the road that you stumble over than like a rock to build a church on.

At another time, a good many days later when they were in Jerusalem at the sacred feast of the passover, Jesus told Peter that he would deny him three times before morning at the time the cock crew. Peter did not believe it at all, and denied it vehemently, and protested that he would stay by Jesus if he had to die with him. And, sure enough, before morning the wicked pharisees had captured Jesus and brought him before the court for a pretended trial, and his friends were scattered and could do nothing.

But Peter followed as close as he could, and when some one said, "This fellow was with Jesus," he denied it and said he did not know him. This happened three times, and just then the cock crew for morning, and Peter remembered what Jesus had said, and what a poor rock he was then for his master to depend on, and he went out and wept bitterly.

## XX. ZACCHEUS WHO CLIMBED A TREE

WHEN Jesus and his friends were going up to Jerusalem a great company of people went with them, and they attracted much attention on the road. When they came to the city of Jericho almost all the people of the city turned out to see the prophet from Galilee of whose fame they had heard, and the narrow streets in the little city of palms were crowded. Rich and poor alike were out, and it was difficult for any one to see well on account of the crowds.

But there was one man named Zaccheus who was bent on seeing Jesus. He was the head of the taxgatherers and a very rich man, but a man whom every one disliked on account of his business, for they thought a "publican" who collected taxes from them for the Romans could not be either an honest man or a loyal citizen. Zaccheus had heard that Jesus, though a great prophet, made friends with taxgatherers whom every one else despised, and he was bound to see what Jesus was like. But Zaccheus was short, and in the crowd he did not have much of a chance, for no one cared for a publican. So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a mulberry tree which grew by the side of the road where Jesus was sure to pass.

Soon the crowds came and he had a good place to see. But when Jesus reached the spot he looked up and said to him, "Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for I will stop at your house to-day."

Yes, it was true, then, that the new prophet of Galilee would talk and even eat with taxgatherers. So he felt greatly honored and got down quickly and gave Jesus a hearty welcome.

I have no doubt he asked Jesus a great many questions about his teaching and was much impressed by it, for when some one in the crowd said, "The prophet can't be very particular, to go to dine with such a bad man as Zaccheus," Zaccheus stepped out where all could hear him, and said to Jesus, "Listen, Master, I will give half of my property to the poor; and any one whom I have over-taxed or cheated I will give him back four times what I took from him."

It was quite a conversion. And Jesus said, "Happiness has come to this house to-day. And this taxgatherer is now an honest, loyal citizen. It was for that purpose I stopped here. Any man of you would seek for that which is lost and try to save it. So I seek out those who are aiming to get higher in goodness, and try to help them."

## XXI. JESUS ENTERING JERUSALEM

THE people among whom Jesus lived had long been expecting a great king to arise among them who should bring back the lost glory of their nation and free the people of their burdens. The great poets of the past had sung about this good time coming. And in their darkest hours of sorrow and humiliation, when their nation was held in bondage and the people treated as slaves, this had been the one hope that had brought cheer to all.

Now the hope grew bright in all hearts that at last this prophecy was speedily to be fulfilled. And as it became known that Jesus was going up to Jerusalem to the feast of the pass-over a great company of people resolved to go with him, hoping that there he would proclaim himself the long-expected king, and begin the reign that was to usher in the thousand years of peace.

They had seen Jesus as he went about Galilee calling the people to a better life and bringing strength and comfort to all; and many of them felt that in such a life as Jesus lived was realized the great hope of their people. Surely here was the great deliverer so long expected.

So it was a joyous company that made the long journey from Galilee to Jerusalem. They were happy together. There was much laughter and happy discourse. Joy showed itself in every face and hope made light their journey and rested in every heart. Many joined them on the way, to catch the Master's words, and because they expected that Jesus would soon put forth his wonderful powers to the utmost.

Even Jesus must have rejoiced at their confidence and enthusiasm, though he knew he was going up to Jerusalem where were many enemies seeking to put him to death, and that he could not longer carry on his work quietly and happily as in Galilee.

At one point on the way some of his followers fell to discussing who should have the chief offices in the new kingdom to be set up at Jerusalem. So Jesus, knowing what they were talking

about, took a little child and placed it beside him and said, "Those who would enter the kingdom must become as this little child, and those who would be greatest among you must become the servant of all."

To the east of Jerusalem rises a high hill called the Mount of Olives. Over this the road climbs, and at a sudden turn about the shoulder of the hill, they see the Holy City spread out before them. Here the joyous company halts to enjoy the scene, their long and tiresome journey almost finished.

In yonder sacred Temple the Messiah, foretold by the great poet-prophets of the past, should proclaim himself the nation's king. But was he not now standing among them? In their joy it seemed to them that the promised happiness and glory was already theirs; and they began shouting, "God bless the son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! God bless him from on high!"

And mounting Jesus upon a young ass, such as their kings rode on, they conducted him in triumph into the city. And many spread their garments in the way to make a carpet over which to ride. And they stripped branches from the trees and waved them in the air, or scattered them in the road before Jesus as he rode onward; while louder and more joyous rose the cry as it was taken up by new voices: "Blessed is he who is coming in the name of the Lord! God bless him from on high!"

## XXII. IN THE TEMPLE AGAIN

WHEN Jesus entered Jerusalem amid the waving of palm branches and the glad shouts of the people he made his way first of all to the Temple, the venerable house of God that the fathers had built. This was the one object of national love and reverence. With its glistening marble pillars and golden trimmings shining in the sun it was easily the most beautiful building in the city of Jerusalem. And there the heart of every loyal Jew was centered, for at the Temple prayers were said for all the people and the priests offered sacrifices and people came from all the world to pay their vows.

So it was with deep reverence that Jesus and his friends drew near the Temple. In the inner courts of the Temple only Jews could go to say their prayers, but in the outer court the people of all nations could worship. And as Jesus neared the top of the long flight of stairs to the outer court of the Temple he naturally expected to hear the sound of voices worshipping God. But what he heard was very different! The bleating of sheep, the lowing of cattle, the cooing of doves, the excited voices of traders and money-changers. It was more like a market place. And the confusion was such that it must have been hard for any one there to say a prayer, and the noise must have even gone inside to the inner courts where the priests ministered for all the people.

The people at the time Jesus lived thought it was nice to offer certain animals in sacrifice to God, burning a portion of their flesh on the altar as they said their prayers; and it was right to have them for sale near the Temple. But they should never have been allowed inside the Temple itself where people were praying. It was very wrong, and Jesus was indignant.

The wicked tradesmen who had brought their traffic inside the sacred courts must have read the righteous anger in the Prophet's face as he stepped inside; and they were well aware of it when he cried out, "It is written in Scripture, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of

thieves." And seizing some ropes for a whip and lash he struck right and left among them and drove them out.

What a scattering there was! Over went the tables of the money-changers, and the cages of the doves, and men rushed this way and that to save their property and to get away from the lash of the ropes and the fierce words of the Reformer as fast as they could.

At last the court was cleared and quiet. Of course the men who had been driven out were mad at Jesus, for bad men who wished to stay bad never did like Jesus, and these men were so enraged that they were determined to put him to death. But Jesus was not afraid. And in the quiet Temple church he sat down where he could see the people giving of their money to the Temple. Some one would come along and with great show count out his money, and drop a big shining gold piece in so that all could see how rich and generous and pious he was.

But by and by there came along a poor woman and dropped in the last cent she had and went away feeling glad that she could give something to God who had given her so much.

There her poor penny lay by the side of the rich gold piece the proud man had just thrown in. When Jesus saw it he said to those about him, "Did you notice that? I tell you, that poor widow has done better than that rich man. For out of his abundance the rich man gave with pride; but she out of her poverty has kept a grateful heart and has given all that she has."

### XXIII. JUDAS WHO BETRAYED JESUS

JESUS chose twelve friends to be closest about him and to learn all that he had to teach them so that they too might become teachers of men and helpers to the truth. These twelve friends we call the twelve apostles, because Jesus sometimes sent them out to preach. We know most about Peter and James and John. But there was one whose name always comes last in any list of the apostles. He was named Judas. Perhaps because he liked to handle money they made him treasurer and he carried the purse or bag of money from which they all used. But his love of money may have been his ruin.

When Jesus was at dinner with Simon, the pharisee, and the woman who was a sinner brought the alabaster box of ointment that was very precious and poured it over Jesus' feet, Judas thought it was a great waste of money and that the ointment should have been sold and the money given to the poor. But Jesus told him, "The poor you have always with you, but the time to do a good turn to a friend is while he is still with you."

This warning seemed only to make Judas worse, and when he found that Jesus, after entering Jerusalem amid the waving of palms as the Messiah King, was not going to set up an earthly kingdom in which there would be wealth and office for those who went with Jesus, Judas' friendship quickly turned to disloyalty and he speedily showed it.

Jesus and his friends ate the sacred passover supper together in an upper room they had hired. How pleasant it must have seemed after their long journeys to have this quiet hour together, and in the Holy City. The passover meal they ate together must have seemed to them like a pledge that they were brothers together.

But Judas was ill at ease as he ate it with them, for he had planned to do the wickedest thing that any one ever heard of. He was going to sell his truest and best friend into the hands of his enemies to be put to death. He had told no one, and no one



suspected it but Jesus himself. And as Jesus and his friends ate the passover meal together Jesus said solemnly, "I tell you, it is one of you who is going to betray me." The friends were all sad, for it did not seem possible that any one could be so bad, and they all protested, "Is it I? Do you mean me?" Then Jesus added, "The hand of him who is going to betray me as a deadly enemy has been dipped as a brother's with mine in this dish."

But Judas must have hardened his heart by not trying to follow the good life when he could, for he soon left the room to hunt up the wicked enemies of Jesus to lead them to him.

After the passover supper Jesus and his eleven friends went out to a park or garden on the Mount of Olives, and before long Judas came piloting a great crowd of people with torches and swords and clubs to take Jesus prisoner.

Judas had arranged a sign by which they could tell which one Jesus was. So Judas went up to Jesus at once and said, "I am glad to see you, Master," and kissed him. It was the kiss of a betrayer.

So they took Jesus prisoner and brought him before their courts in a pretended trial and put this good man to death as a traitor to his country by nailing him to a huge cross of wood and leaving him there to die.

But Jesus was noble even in such a cruel death, and brave, for he felt that Our Father was with him; and he prayed even for those who put him to death, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." Then Jesus gave up his soul to God.

It seems sometimes that Jesus was even more noble in his death than in the wonderful life he had lived. And when Judas realized what a wicked thing he had done in betraying his master and truest and best friend, he took the thirty pieces of silver he had received for betraying Jesus and threw them into the holy place of the Temple where only the High Priest went, and then he went out and hanged himself.

## XXIV. THE WALK TO EMMAUS

AFTER the death of Jesus two of the disciples set out to walk to Emmaus, sad of heart and discouraged. The Master had been crucified. The prophet of their faith had disappointed them. They had hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel. When he entered Jerusalem they had expected him to prove himself the Messiah King so long awaited. They thought he would there show his wonderful powers to all the people and confound his enemies. But he had been captured without a struggle, and put to death like a common criminal. And the disciples were scattered, and out of heart.

But now, after the third day, came the astonishing rumor that he is alive.

As they talk together on the way Jesus himself joins them, and talks with them, but they do not recognize him. Still, as he talks with them of the great beliefs of their nation, their hearts glow with a wondrous hope and a new assurance.

When they drew near to the village to which they were going Jesus made as though he were going farther; but they urged him to come in and stay with them. "Stop with us," they said, "for it is getting late and the sun is already low." So Jesus went in to stop with them. And as he sat at the table with them he took the bread, and said the blessing, and broke it, and gave it to them.

Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he disappeared from their sight.

Then they hastened back to Jerusalem that same evening to find the other disciples, and told them what had happened to them on their walk and how they had recognized Jesus on his breaking the bread.

But the other disciples, too, had stories to tell of their Master. Very early that morning some of the women had gone to the tomb with spices to put around the body of Jesus, and they had found the tomb open, and two shining angels had appeared

unto them saying, "Why are you looking among the graves for one who is alive? He is not here, he is risen."

And when the women had hurried with this news to the apostles, they would not believe it. But Peter and John set out to run to the tomb, but John ran faster than Peter and got to the tomb first and found the stone rolled away. Then Peter came up and went inside the tomb and found it empty.

And several of them had seen messenger angels who told them that Jesus had risen from the dead. So the disciples came to know that such a life as Jesus lived could not die but must rise from the grave. So they grew to have a strong faith in the good life and to know that nothing could harm it. And before long they were ready to take Jesus' place and to go about doing good.

## XXV. THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT

AFTER Jesus had been put to death the friends of Jesus remained for a time at Jerusalem, growing all the time more certain that such a life as Jesus lived could not end at the grave but must live on, and that his spirit was still with them. So they were often in the Temple church, and on Sundays they always met together to break bread as Jesus had done at the last meal he had eaten with them; and they spent much time in earnest conversation and prayer.

But Jesus had told them the good news of the good life; and good news can't be kept secret very long. When you have it, you must tell it. So after a time they began to feel that Jesus would like to have them go out among all the people telling the good news of the kingdom.

But while they still waited at Jerusalem, their hearts burning within them with the glad message, at the feast of the pentecost in the course of the harvest Thanksgiving the disciples were all together in a great room, when suddenly they heard in the sky a noise like the rushing of a strong wind coming nearer and nearer. And the noise filled all the house in which they were sitting.

Then they saw tongues of what appeared to be flame or fire, separating, so that one settled on each of them.

At first they did not know what it meant. Then they were all filled with the spirit of God and began to speak His praise as the spirit prompted them.

The people who heard them were greatly excited because each one heard them speaking in his own native language. And they kept saying, "Are not all these Galileans? Yet they worship just as we do at home, whether we came from Greece, or Persia, or Egypt, or Rome, or from Arabia. And each one of us hears them telling the great things God has done, as if he were at home in his native land. What does it mean?"

But some of the people sneered at them and said they had taken too much of the new wine of the harvest.

Then Peter, whom Jesus had said should be the rock among his brethren, stood up and raised his voice so all could hear, and said, "Men of Judea, and visitors staying here at Jerusalem, let me tell you what this means, and mark my words. These men are not drunk, but this is that of which the prophet Joel spoke in his poem:

"The days shall come, as God has said,  
When every one shall have my Spirit.  
Your sons and daughters shall be prophets,  
Your young men shall see visions,  
And your old men shall dream dreams;  
And on every one shall my Spirit rest."

After that experience the disciples were the more ready to go out telling the good news of the good life; and it was an eager band that soon went forth with joyful swing to all the countries about, telling the gospel of the good life Jesus had lived, and winning many people to it.

## XXVI. AT THE BEAUTIFUL GATE

ONE day, as Peter and John were going up into the Temple Court at the time of the three o'clock prayers, a man was carried past to be set down to beg.

The man had been lame from his birth, and every day some friends carried him and put him at the gate of the Temple called "The Beautiful Gate" so as to beg of those who went in.

What a contrast that made, — the ragged, deformed, and groaning cripple set against the beauty and finish of the archway to the Temple with its rich carvings and lovely ornaments! Every one who went in would see him, and they could not help feeling sorry for him.

When the poor beggar saw Peter and John going in he put out his hand and asked them to give him something. Peter and John stopped before him and fixed their eyes on him, and Peter said, "Look at us." The man expected to receive something pretty good, and he looked straight at them, and Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none. What I have, that I give you. In the name of Jesus, get up and walk!"

The beggar felt the strength of the new faith, and Peter gave him his hand and lifted him up, and the man stood on his feet and began to walk about, and went with them into the Temple to give thanks to God.

And when the people saw the man, who had been a lame beggar so long, walking about and praising God, they were utterly astonished and amazed at what had happened to him; and they gathered about Peter and John to ask them how they did it, and who was this Jesus of whom they spoke.

As the people crowded round, some of them on tiptoe, looking over heads to see Peter and John and to get a glimpse of the healed cripple who kept close to the two disciples as the best friends he had ever found, since they had given him something better than silver or gold, Peter said to them: "Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this? and what are you staring at us for, as though we, by any power or goodness of our own,

had been able to make this man walk? The God of our fathers, who is also the present Helper, has given honor to the name of Jesus who was to us the very guide to life, though you put him to death, and it was the faith which his life inspired within us that has made this complete cure of the man, before the eyes of you all."

While Peter and John were still speaking to the people of the life of Jesus, the rulers and priests and scribes came up and clapped Peter and John in prison for teaching the people without their permission. And the next day as they let them go they warned them to give up speaking or teaching for the cause of Jesus altogether. But Peter and John said, "You must be your own judges whether it is better to obey God's voice or man's: but as for ourselves we cannot help telling of what we have seen and heard." So they were not afraid.

## XXVII. THE STONING OF STEPHEN

THE little band of followers of Jesus won many friends to the cause of the good life, and among these was one named Stephen. He was a man "full of grace and faith," and soon became a leader among them. He was noted for his power and wisdom. When he taught in public some of the learned men and devout scribes tried to argue with him. But Stephen knew the Mosaic Law so much better than they did, and besides was so learned and wise, that he easily put them to confusion.

Stephen had the truth in everything he said, and he clearly saw that the religion of the good life was so much grander and nobler than what was taught around him, that he was bold in saying so.

And since his enemies could not meet him in argument, they, at last, laid a plan to catch him. With them the Temple, so gorgeous and wonderful, was an object of great veneration. And when Stephen said that "the Most High God cannot be shut up in a building made by man, since He is everywhere and dwells also in human hearts," they said that he blasphemed; that is, that he had spoken disrespectfully of the Temple.

So they arrested him and brought him before their courts. There Stephen defended himself in a great speech. He began quietly and with great tact. But as he warmed to his subject he threw aside all caution, and upbraided his accusers for being "narrow minded souls, heathen in heart and ears." "You do not heed what God says to you," he tells them. "He gave you the Law, but you do not keep it."

As they listened to this, the judges who should have kept calm, grew furious and "gnashed their teeth at Stephen."

But Stephen was filled with the spirit of courage and truth, and would not stop. "Look," he said, "I see Heaven open, and Jesus, the Son of Man, standing at God's right hand to judge you."

At this the court broke up with a mad shout. The judges held their ears for fear they hear some worse blasphemy; and



the witnesses, not waiting for a verdict from the court, rushed upon Stephen, and forcing him outside the city began to stone him for saying that Jesus, a man, could be at the right hand of God.

As they were dressed in long loose coats they could not very well throw stones, so they laid their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul, of whom we shall hear later.

As poor Stephen was about to die, he prayed, very much as his master Jesus did as he neared his death, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." And with these words "he fell asleep" in death.

So it was that Stephen, so wise, so courageous, so calm, so patient, so gentle, became the first martyr to the cause of the good life.

## XXVIII. ON THE HOUSE TOP

SOME of the first friends of Jesus, like Peter, felt that the story of the good life should be told only to the people of their own nation. Peter thought that only his own people were good enough to have the good news told them. So when the disciples scattered out to tell the good news of the life of Jesus, Peter went only to those who were Jews.

In his journeys Peter came to the little town of Joppa down on the Mediterranean Sea, and put up at the house of one Simon, a tanner, who dwelt by the sea. It was not a pleasant place to stop at, a tanner's house, with all the smells and dirt incident to the trade in early days; but perhaps the warm breeze from the sea blowing at night toward the mountains, and in the day-time from the snow-capped peaks of Lebanon, made the place endurable. So here Peter abode many days.

One day, near noon, just before dinner was served, he went up on the house top to pray. And as he prayed he fell asleep. Up on the house top he must have seemed near heaven. For in his dream he saw that the heavens were open and something like a great sail was descending, let down by its four corners toward the earth. And when he looked in the great sheet he saw all manner of four-footed beasts and creeping things of the earth and birds of the air.

And while he wondered what the scene might mean he became aware of a voice speaking to him which said, "Stand up, Peter, kill something, and eat."

Peter was hungry enough to eat almost anything just then, but not hungry enough to overcome his prejudices even in a dream. For he was a Jew, trained in all the narrowing requirements of the Jewish religion of that day. He must not touch things ceremonially "unclean," — that the Temple priest had not first blessed.

So, hungry as he was, he replied, "No, Lord, I dare not, for as a Jew I am forbidden to eat these animals which are common and unclean. I cannot, for I have never eaten anything 'defiled' and 'unclean.'"

No doubt his pride made him feel that he was doing a virtuous thing in refusing the Lord's offer. So he scarcely heard the words of reproach spoken to him: "What God hath pronounced 'clean,' do not thou regard as 'common' or 'defiled.'"

Three times this drama was enacted before him, and then suddenly the sheet was taken up into the heavens, and Peter awoke.

As he did so three strangers stood before the gate and called and asked "whether Simon, who was surnamed Peter, was lodging there." Peter was still only half awake and was wondering what the strange dream could mean, when the voice of duty spoke to him again, this time arousing him: "Behold, there are men looking for you at this moment. Go down at once, and do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them."

So Peter went down and the men said, "Cornelius, a Roman centurion, but a righteous man and one that feareth God, was warned of God by a holy angel, to send for thee into his house and to hear words from thee."

What could Peter reply? Peter a Jew to go into the house of Cornelius, a Gentile, a captain in the Roman army that was oppressing Israel! Cornelius was a haughty man of war and blood: should a disciple of the meek and lowly Jesus go to him?

Knowing Peter, we would expect him to reject the invitation with scorn! But knowing the spirit of the Master whom he served we are not surprised to find him throwing off his prejudices as a free man of the free spirit and going with them. The meaning of the vision in his dream became clear. He was willing now to eat all kinds of food and to associate with men of every nation. There was nothing common or unclean that the Lord had made. In every nation good men were acceptable in the sight of God.

Cornelius ceased to be a Roman captain engaged in the bloody business of oppression; he became a man who needed the "gospel of peace by Jesus Christ" preached to him. His house ceased to be a place of pollution; it became a temple of God because sheltering God's children. The meat set before him was no longer defiled but blessed since it gave the body strength to spend itself in the Master's service.

## XXIX. HOW PETER GOT OUT OF PRISON

ABOUT that time king Herod wished to please the Jews over whom he ruled, and he found he could easily do it by ill-treating the followers of Jesus. So he had James, the brother of John, put to death, and seized Peter and put him in prison, expecting to give him a trial and then sentence him to death.

That he might keep Peter safe he had him chained to two soldiers while two others stood guard in front of the door of the prison cell. There seemed no chance for Peter to escape. How could he escape unless an angel helped him?

And so it seemed to Peter that an angel did help him. He was fast asleep between the two soldiers, fastened to them with two chains, when all at once a light shone in the cell, and an angel stood by him and tapped him on the shoulder and said, "Get up quickly." As Peter did so the chains fell from his wrists, and the angel said, "Put on your belt and your shoes, and throw your cloak around you, and follow me."

Peter went out and followed the angel, without knowing whether he was dreaming it all, or was really awake. He passed the first guard, and the second, and then came to the big iron gate outside, but that opened as he came up, and he walked out and went along one street, and all at once the angel left him.

Then Peter knew it was more than a dream and that he had been rescued from king Herod's hands and from the fate the people expected. And he gave thanks to God.

As soon as he knew he was really free he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where he knew many of his friends would be gathered praying for his release. When he came to the door in the gate he gave a knock, and after a while Rhoda, the maid-servant, came to answer it. As it was late at night she asked first, "Who's there?" and when she heard Peter's voice she was so overjoyed that she forgot to unbolt the gate and left Peter outside while she ran in the house and told the people that Peter had come and was outside.

They thought she had gone crazy from so much excitement. But as she persisted that it was so, they said, "Then he has been killed; and it is his spirit!"

But Peter kept on knocking at the gate, and when at last they did open it and saw him, they were much astonished. After they became quiet enough Peter told them how God had brought him out of prison. And then leaving word for the other brethren he left the house and went away to another place.

In the morning when the prison guards found that they had been asleep and their prisoner had escaped, there was a great outcry. But Peter was not to be found. And not long after, king Herod died.

### XXX. THE LIGHT THAT PAUL SAW

Do you remember that when Stephen was stoned the angry witnesses who were stoning him laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul? Saul never saw Jesus, but he got an idea that Jesus was an enemy of his race and was trying to destroy the Temple religion, so Saul did all that he could to have the followers of Jesus, both men and women, scourged and put into prison. He was the worst enemy they had, being, as Saul himself confessed, "exceedingly mad against them."

One day as Saul was going up to Damascus to persecute the followers there, as he went on the way over the hot, dusty road, suddenly a bright light flashed from the sky, all about him, brighter than the sun at noon. It was so bright all were blinded by it and fell with their faces to the ground to shut out the light.

Then Saul heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" Saul was so startled that he did not know what he was saying, and answered, "Who are you, master?" And the voice said, "I am Jesus whom you are seeking to hurt, but you are hurting yourself worse. But stand upon your feet, and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

Saul was still blinded by his vision so that he could not see, and had to be led into Damascus, bewildered and trembling. And for three days he was unable to see and took nothing either to eat or drink. Soon after this he was called Paul.

Now there was at Damascus a disciple named Ananias. And he had a dream in which Jesus came to him and told him to get up and go to the street called Straight Street, and ask at the house of Judas for a man named Paul, a native of Tarsus.

Of course, all the followers of the good life of Jesus had learned that their worst enemy, Paul, was coming to Damascus to persecute them, and they were greatly excited. But they had all learned one thing from Jesus, and that was not to be afraid so long as they were right.

So Ananias went to where Paul was, and found him praying. And he said to him: "Paul, my brother, I have been sent by the master — I mean Jesus, the same who appeared to you as you came here — to show you the true light: that you may be filled with the holy spirit and carry the message of the good life to all the nations."

So Paul saw the true light, and followed it. And whereas he had been the worst enemy the followers of Jesus had, he now became their leading worker. And was ready to endure all things for the master he followed and to count it but gain.

Once near the end of Paul's life, "just to recall," as he said, he counted up what he had suffered. The account ran something like this: "I have been put in prison more than anybody else. Flogged, times without number. Five times I was publicly whipped. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I have been shipwrecked. I have been through dangers of rivers and robbers and perils of travel in city and country and at sea. Often have I been without food or shelter, and have suffered hunger and thirst and cold and nakedness. And toil and hardship and anxiety have been my daily burden. But counting it all up, I am more than victor through Jesus and the good life."

### XXXI. ON THE ROAD WITH PAUL

PAUL has been often called the apostle to the Gentiles, for while Peter and others carried the news of the good life to the people of their own nation, Paul carried it abroad to other nations and people. And it is largely through Paul's influence that the good news has come to us.

As Paul went about telling his message he had many strange experiences. At one place named Lystra, Paul and his companion had been able to help so many people that a crowd gathered about them and said, "The gods have made themselves like men and come down to us."

So they called Paul "Mercury" after one of their gods because he took the lead in speaking; and Paul's companion they called "Jupiter" because he was large and dignified.

Soon the priest from the pagan temple to these gods came hastening with garlands of flowers to put over their shoulders, and with oxen to kill and offer in sacrifice to them so that the people could say their prayers to them.

When Paul and his companion saw this they were horrified, and tore their clothes as a sign of their distress, and rushed among the people to stop them. And Paul said, "We are men like you. Do not worship us. We have come with the good news of the one God who gives us everything we have and makes us glad in his love."

So Paul and his companion barely escaped being worshiped as pagan gods. And the next day they went to the other extreme, for some enemies stirred up a crowd against them and they were stoned as criminals, and Paul was left outside the city for dead.

At another town where Paul and his companion went a mob rose against them, and the police stripped them of their coats and ordered them to be whipped with rods. After they had received many stripes the police put them in prison and gave orders to the jailor to keep them safely. To make doubly sure they would not get away the jailor put them into the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.



The other prisoners in the jail had heard people talking about Paul, and now they had a chance to see him and hear him themselves. So Paul told them about Jesus and the good life, and he and his companion sang them some of the new songs the friends sang together, and prayed with them.

About midnight, as they were praying and singing hymns to God, suddenly there was a great earthquake that shook the whole building to its foundations and threw down the walls so that all the prisoners could escape.

The jailor was in bed asleep when the earthquake came and awoke him; and when he saw the jail in ruins he supposed of course that all the prisoners had escaped. And knowing that the Governor would put him to death for allowing his charges to get away, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself when he heard Paul's voice calling loudly to him, "Do not harm yourself. We are all here."

As soon as the jailor could get a light he rushed in to see if it were really so, and to find out what kind of prisoners he had since they did not run off when all the doors were open. And when he found Paul and his companion he threw himself at their feet and said, "What must I do to have such a life as this?" So Paul told him and all of his family the good news and they were made to rejoice. Then the jailor took Paul and his companion into his own house as if they were guests and not prisoners.

The next morning the police sent orders to the jailor to let his prisoners go. But when the jailor told this to Paul, Paul said, "No, indeed. They have whipped us in public without a trial, though we are Roman citizens, and have put us in prison, and now they want to send us out secretly. No! Let them come and take us out themselves."

As soon as the police learned that Paul and his companions were Roman citizens they were alarmed, and came begging their pardon, and took them out of jail, and helped them on their way.

This is the way Paul carried the good news to the Gentile nations, over a thorn-road, with ups and downs; now whipped, now stoned, and now put in prison, but never turning back.

## XXXII. THE GREAT BONFIRE

PAUL carried the good news of the good life to many of the rich, populous cities at the eastern end of the great sea. In one of these cities, Antioch, the followers of Jesus first got their name "Christians," — a name that they have kept ever since and have come to love, as showing that they are followers of Jesus, the Christ, or loved one.

At Ephesus, another rich, magnificent city, Paul stayed nearly three years telling the good news to all who would hear him, and starting churches in many of the towns and cities round about.

Here he "worked night and day"; in the early morning and evening at his own trade of making tents and sails, and from eleven till four he lectured and taught every day in the public hall, and at other times and places as he could. So it was a busy life he led.

Here, too, he had many enemies. For in Ephesus there were many bad men who did not want to hear of the good life, and did not want Paul to succeed. Some of these people pretended to tell fortunes or to work magic. And some of the people thought that Paul must practise magic of some sort, to be able to do so much good.

And there were some who even considered that an apron that Paul had used at his trade or a handkerchief that had touched him was sacred and had power to work miracles. So Paul had to tell them that simply to be true and good was a stronger magic than all things else.

One day two of these bad men who made money by pretending to work magic tried to cure a crazy man by some of their arts when the frenzied man cried out, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?" and sprang upon them and whipped both of them unmercifully.

When this incident became known those who had been practising the black arts were in great fear, and many of them came with a full confession of their practises, and brought their books on magic into the public square and made a great bonfire of

them. And even some of the friends who secretly still believed in magic confessed their folly, and brought their books on sorcery to add to the conflagration. So when the bonfire was through, thousands of dollars' worth of harmful books had been cleaned out of the city forever.

It must have made Paul's heart glad; for not only were those who brought their books helped to a better life, but the story of the great bonfire was told throughout all that region, and people began to think for themselves and to inquire about the life of Jesus.

Now there was in Ephesus a very beautiful temple to a pagan goddess Diana. The temple was so beautiful that they said the sun did not see anything more magnificent all day than Diana's temple; and people came from all parts of the world to see it.

Of course, when the people began to think for themselves and to know about the good life, they thought it foolish to say their prayers to a heathen goddess of gold and silver. And pretty soon, those who made little souvenirs of the goddess Diana for sale to visitors at the temple found their sales growing less. And they grew alarmed lest they lose their means of making a living.

So one of them started an outcry against Paul. Soon he had a mob of excited people who crowded into the public square and shouted, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," until they were hoarse. Whenever any one started to make a speech those who could not hear him howled and yelled until he stopped. And by and by the whole city was in an uproar, and no one knew just what was the matter except that every one else was shouting, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians."

After two or three hours of this useless shouting the mayor of the city succeeded in calming the mob, and sending them home; and no harm was done.

Not long afterward Paul bade his friends at Ephesus good-bye, and went on to other cities to tell the good news there.

### XXXIII. PAUL SAYING GOOD-BYE

AFTER Paul had been preaching the good news to many of the cities of the Greeks, he felt that he must make another visit to the home church at Jerusalem. But as such a journey had many dangers in it, and as Paul had found enemies wherever he went he did not know whether he should ever return. So he began to visit again all the churches he had started and to say good-bye to all the friends along the way.

Paul had a great many dear and close friends, so the parting was a sad one. Sometimes they would all come down to the ship to see him off. First they would all kneel together on the beach and pray; then the farewells would be said with many tears and kisses; and then Paul would go aboard the ship and they would watch it sail away.

At one place in an upper room they sat up all night with him, as he was to leave in the morning, and as Paul was talking to them a young man sitting in the window went to sleep and fell out. Of course they were all alarmed and supposed they should find him dead. But Paul rushed down and found him alive and not much hurt; so they went back upstairs and Paul talked with them till morning.

At another place a man who prophesied took Paul's girdle and tied his own hands and feet with it and said, "The man to whom this girdle belongs will be bound like this at Jerusalem and be sent a prisoner among his enemies." At once everybody began to beg Paul to keep away from Jerusalem. But he said, "Why do you cry like this and break my heart? For my part I am not only ready to go to prison but to go to death at Jerusalem for the sake of Jesus, the master." Of course after this they could say nothing more.

When at last Paul reached the home church at Jerusalem the friends were glad indeed to greet him and to learn from his own lips how the cause of Jesus had been prospered among the nations.

But there were many bitter enemies of Paul's at Jerusalem,

too, and when they saw him in the Temple church they raised an outcry against him and had him arrested. And more than forty of his enemies got together in a plot against him and took a pledge that they would neither eat nor drink anything until they had killed Paul.

One of Paul's friends learned of this plot and warned the Roman officer, and he had Paul specially guarded and sent off to another town to be tried before the Governor. This Governor was more anxious to please the Jews than to set Paul free, so with one pretext and another he kept Paul in prison for two years.

Then another Governor came in, and he wanted to send Paul back to Jerusalem to be tried: but Paul said, No; that he was a Roman citizen and had a right to be tried at a Roman court, either before the Governor, or before the Emperor at Rome. So it was decided to send Paul to Rome.

But while they waited for a ship going to Italy, king Agrippa came on a visit to the Governor, and knowing Paul was one of his prisoners asked to hear him. So Paul was brought in, still wearing his prison chains, and made a splendid speech before the king and governor. They were both agreed that Paul might have been set free if he had not asked to be sent to Rome.

But Paul did not regret it; for in a dream Jesus came to him and said, "Fear not, Paul, and be of good cheer. For as you have told the good news of the good life so well at Jerusalem, you must tell it also at Rome."

### XXXIV. SHIPWRECKED ON THE WAY TO ROME

PAUL was a prisoner on board a boat. But he was glad, for he was being taken to Rome, the capital of the world, and would there have a chance to tell the good news to new friends.

They set sail late in the year in a little boat sailing along the coast. On board were a number of prisoners, with Roman soldiers to guard them, and officers and passengers, — two hundred and seventy-six in all. They could not sail fast for the winds were against them, and when they finally got to the island of Crete at a little harbor called Fair Havens, Paul advised that they put in there and put up for the winter as the winter storms had already begun. But the captain of the boat thought they could get on to the next harbor which was safer and winter there.

So when a light wind sprang up from the south they thought they could easily make it, and weighed anchor and kept along the coast of Crete, close in shore. But they had not gone far when a perfect hurricane came down on them off the land, — a Northeaster as it is called. The ship was caught by it, and was unable to keep her head to the wind, so they had to give way and let her drive before it.

They braced the ship as well as they could, and took off all sails, — and the next day they began throwing the cargo overboard to lighten the ship. And the day after they threw out the ship's tackle with their own hands; so there was not much left that they could get along without.

The storm kept up so hard that for many days and nights they did not see either sun or stars, and they had given up all hope of ever reaching land alive.

When things were at their worst and they had gone a long time without eating, Paul stepped forward and tried to cheer them up. "Be of good cheer," he said, "for last night as I slept an angel stood by me and assured me that we should all be saved, — and nothing lost but the ship. But we shall be wrecked on some island." So he urged them to eat something, and they felt better.

That night, about midnight, they found they were nearing some land, so they put out an anchor and anxiously waited until daylight. As soon as it was light they tried to run the boat into a cove on shore but it grounded and went to pieces. In the confusion some one cried, "Kill the prisoners, lest they escape." But the Roman officer did not listen to the cruel suggestion, and ordered every one to get to shore as best he could, on boards or pieces of the ship.

When they were all safe, they found out that the island was called Malta. The people living there were very kind to them, for they lit a fire and took them all under shelter.

As Paul was gathering up sticks for the fire, a snake came out of the brush and bit his hand. When the natives saw it they said, "That man is evidently a murderer, for though he has escaped from the sea, justice will not allow him to live." But Paul shook the snake off, and was none the worse. The natives, however, watched him for a long while, expecting that he would suddenly fall dead, but when nothing happened to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god.

Paul and his companions waited in Malta until winter was over, and then went on another boat to Rome. There Paul found friends to meet him, and lived in a hired house of his own for two years, telling the good news of the good life to many new friends.

### XXXV. WHO IS THE GREATEST?

WHO is the greatest man in the world? The people long ago used to ask this question. Some of them said that if they had the power to work all kinds of miracles and to tell what was going to happen in the future, they would be greater than anybody else.

Others said that the greatest man was the wise man who had the gift of teaching and could understand all hidden truth.

Still others said that the one who gave most to the poor should be called the greatest.

But Paul gave another answer. He said that if the one who worked miracles, even if he could remove mountains, did not do it to show his love, nobody cared for him. And the wise man was soon forgotten unless he also loved. And one might give out all his money to feed the poor, and afterward give away his body in charity, but unless he had love it did him no good. So love, said Paul, is the greatest of all.

This was also what John said, the disciple that was nearest to Jesus. He lived to be very old, so old that they had to carry him to church and hold him up in the pulpit. And then he always gave the same sermon. It was this: "Little children, love one another."

One day some one asked him why he always said that. And he replied, "Because the Master taught it, and if one really loves, it is enough."

What is it that has never been tamed? Men have tamed horses or dogs so that they do just what they tell them to. And everything else has been tamed; even lions and tigers, and birds, and snakes, and fishes. But no one has ever tamed the tongue. If you want it to keep away from a tooth, right there it goes. And though it is small, it can do a world of mischief. It is like a little spark of fire that can set the big woods ablaze. So the tongue, if it says a little lie, can set a whole world afire with hatred.

But a tongue that has once learned to call Jesus Master and



to pray to God as "Our Father" ought to be made to speak only good things.

What game is most like following the good life? It is like running a Marathon race. There one makes ready beforehand, and will not eat or drink what will harm him. Then when the time comes, he throws off all useless clothing, or anything that would weigh him down or keep him back; pays no attention to the applause or the gibes of the crowd; and presses on toward the mark for the prize.

And the prize in this case is the high calling of the good life which God showed to be possible for all of us when Jesus lived that life.

What armor does the Christian soldier need as he marches under the banner of Jesus? For a belt he must have truth all around him. And he must keep right-doing in front of him as a shining breastplate. And on his feet he must have shoes that are ready to march for the good life of peace.

On his head for a covering he must wear the helmet of love and purity. And to protect him he wants the shield of faith that makes him sure that truth and right and love will win.

And the sword with which he does battle is the word of God, the spirit of the good life.

### XXXVI. THE DREAM THAT JOHN HAD

I WAS on the island of Patmos on a Sunday and fell into a trance. Suddenly I heard behind me a loud voice like the blast of a trumpet. It said, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches in Asia."

I turned to see who it was that spoke to me, and as I turned I saw seven golden lamps, and in the midst of the lamps one like a man in a robe reaching to his feet, and with a golden girdle across his breast. His hair was white as snow; his eyes were like flaming fire, and his feet were like brass when it is melted. In his hand he held seven stars. From his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword. And his face was like the sun at noon.

When I saw him I fell at his feet like one dead. He laid his hand on me and said, "Do not be afraid. I am the First, and the Last, the Everliving. I died, and I am alive for ever and ever. I hold the keys of the Grave and of the Place of the Dead. The seven stars are the Angels of the seven churches. And the seven lamps are the seven churches."

Then he showed me a great white throne with rainbow colors all around it. And out from the throne came flashes of lightning and voices and peals of thunder. And there were seven torches there, and a sea as of glass, clear as crystal.

And around the throne were four creatures full of eyes in front and behind to see all that happened in the world even to the most hidden things. The first creature was like a lion. The second creature was like a calf. The third creature had a face like a man. And the fourth was like an eagle on the wing. And each of the creatures had six wings, and all round and within they were full of eyes. And day and night they never ceased to say

"Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty  
Who was, and is, and shall be forever more."

And I heard what seemed to be the shout of a vast throng of people, like the sound of many waters, and like the sound of loud peals of thunder, crying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our

God the Almighty is King. Let us rejoice and be glad and pay Him honor."

Then I saw that the sky was parted. And there appeared a white horse. Its rider was called "Faithful and True." His eyes were flaming fires. On his head were many stars. And he bore a name, written, which no one knows but himself. And the name by which he is called is "The Word of God."

And with him came the armies of Heaven, mounted on white horses, and clothed in fine linen, white and pure. And they made war against all the badness in the world and drove it out, like one that treads the grapes in the press and the maddening wine of wrath and hatred gushes out.

And when I looked again I saw new heavens and a new earth. And I saw the holy city of God being let down and planted here upon the earth. And I heard a loud voice from the throne which said, "See, the dwelling-place of God is set up among men. And God will live with them. And they shall be His people. and He shall be their God."

Then the angel said to me, "Write, for these words may be trusted and are true. And the time is at hand."

# HELPS FOR TEACHERS



## HELPS FOR TEACHERS

### I. WHY THE BABY WAS NAMED JOHN

Read the Introductory Note for general directions for the use of all these lesson stories. The purpose of the lessons will be achieved if through these stories the child is made to feel that the kingdom of God is very close about him, and that when he tries to live the good life he is hastening its coming.

This sense of God's love ever about him should become the child's second nature. Jesus recognized this when he said "of such is the kingdom of God." The kingdom or rule of the good-life belongs to the child-like, to those whose nature is open to all good influences.

In the child's life is repeated in epitome the experience of the race. The child instinctively sees the truth of the Bible stories, and needs but to be touched with the true life to respond to its influence. Explanation or discussion will seldom be necessary. Tell the story with imagination and insight and trust it to leave its own impress.

The child living over in his own unfolding nature the experience of the ages will feel without argument that he is in the divine order. And these "God-saturated" stories of the New Testament, in which God is always present in some human form divine, will come to him like something he has always known, and entering into his growing mind will become a governing force in life.

The story of the birth and naming of John the Baptist is found only in Luke, chapter i. 5-25, 57-80. John is to be the messenger that is to announce the coming of the new day of God's love to man.

The "joy and gladness" (14) which the baby John is to bring to his parents should attend the birth of every child. Do we not feel it to be so? Think how many times "the mother and the child" has been painted by the artists of all the ages.

The angel messenger announcing the baby's coming, and also the fact that John is to be consecrated to God from his birth (15), suggest the story of little Samuel which should already be known to the children. 1 Samuel i. 3.

Picture, John the Baptist, — Andrea del Sarto. (Perry Pictures, 360, Address Malden, Mass.)

## II. THE CHRISTMAS STORY

The Christmas story was the hope of the Jewish nation. It was their view of a millennium. See Sargent's frieze of The Prophets from the Boston Public Library, where the prophets, though some are in despair, are looking forward to the coming of a ruler in Israel upon whom the Spirit of the Lord will rest. (Perry Pictures, 1033-1037.)

Expressions of this hope are found in Isaiah ix.; xi.; lii.; Micah v. and elsewhere.

Read in Luke ii. 8-20.

This Christmas hope cheers all our hearts, — the hope of a time when God's love shall be clearly shown unto us.

Picture, The Holy Night, — Correggio. (Perry Pictures, 367.) Here is expressed the mother's happiness, the shepherds' wonder, the angels' gladness, and the joy of all nature.

## III. THE BIRTH OF JESUS

The Christmas hope finds its culmination in the birth of Jesus. Contrast his humble birth with the magnificence of the hope that found its realization through him. So all high things have lowly origin. The seed must come before the harvest. Here is encouragement. We must keep the love of God in our hearts and love all true and good things so purely that we never cease to grow as God intended we should.

Many Madonna pictures show the mother Mary and the infant Jesus as artists have delighted to portray them.

The picture chosen for this lesson, Arrival of the Shepherds, — Lerolle (Perry Pictures, 620), well shows the joyful surprise of the shepherds at the humble surroundings of the stable and the glory that fills it.

Scripture references, Luke ii. 1-8, 22-40.

## IV. WISE MEN FROM THE EAST

This is one of the wonder-stories told by an early people as they welcomed their king. The story shows their love and reverence, and their belief that even the stars and the universe

work for him who is in league with them. In so far it is true. We need not question if the events related actually happened.

Contrast this love and reverence with the hatred and wickedness of king Herod in his slaughter of the innocents.

Christmas is a season of gift-giving. What is the best gift? Is it not one that shows our love? And we do not need to make an expensive gift to show how true our love is.

Scripture reference, Matthew ii.

Picture, Worship of the Wise Men, — Hofmann. (Perry Pictures, 797 D.)

## V. THE BOY JESUS IN THE TEMPLE

This is the only incident we have told us of the life of Jesus from the time of his infancy until he was about thirty years of age and ready to take an active part in the world's activity. It is a precious passage we could ill afford to lose, for it shows what a pure manly boy he was, and gives us an insight into the kind of man he will become. The incident has been used by artists, poets, preachers, and teachers of all ages.

Make the children realize what it would mean to such a boy to go up to Jerusalem and to view the Temple for the first time. For a description of the Temple consult Edersheim "The Temple," or a good encyclopædia.

The incident may show us too what children studied then and the care with which Jesus may have been trained. "Our chief care," says Josephus, "is to educate our children well; and we think it to be the most necessary business of our whole life to observe the laws that have been given us, and to keep those rules of piety that have been handed down to us." The education was scriptural and religious, but Jesus grew up with the idea that all life is religious.

The true child is "obedient unto his parents" with a love and loyalty that never falters. Luke i. 40-52.

Picture, Christ and the Doctors, — Hofmann. (Perry Pictures, 800.)

## VI. A VOICE FROM THE WILDERNESS

There is something wild and rugged in the nature of John the Baptist. You feel his earnestness and his sincerity. He



is not thinking of himself. He would arouse the people from their sins and their indifference, and make possible the bright day of God's love of which he was but "the dayspring" or the first awakening ray.

Like Jesus he hated nothing so much as pretense and fashionable meanness, but he had not the love and tenderness that Jesus had, so he is "only a voice." But he is a prophet, yes, and "more than a prophet" as Jesus said, for he made ready in many hearts the coming of the new light of love, and ushered in the golden day.

John used hard words and rough methods because he thought the times demanded it. And he was unselfish and fearless in his desire to do for the good of the people.

The story here gives only the first account of the preaching of John, and of Jesus offering himself to be baptized by him. Matthew iii. 1-17; Mark i. 1-11; Luke iii. 1-22. The teacher may read also the later history of John the Baptist that is full of tragic interest. Luke vii. 18-28; Mark vi. 14-29.

Renan's "Life of Jesus," *John the Baptist*, gives a vivid and highly colored portrayal of this great prophet of righteousness. John and Jesus had much in common. They were about the same age, and may have been cousins.

Picture, John the Baptist preaching in the Wilderness, — Doré. (Perry Pictures, 4131.)

## VII. AT THE BOYHOOD HOME

Point out how natural it was for Jesus to return to his own home and to his own people when he became aware of the good news within his heart. We want to tell our good news to our friends and to share its joy with those we love.

There is a lesson here in consecration. He would bring the holy purpose in his heart as an offering to God in the church of his boyhood and young manhood. At christening the baby is brought into the church by its parents. At confirmation and at the time of joining the church one comes of his own free will to thank God for the life given and to offer it in His service.

Jesus must have loved the church and it was his custom to attend its services. But it must have been a sorrow to him that many who called themselves good churchmen should have been opposed to the good news he brought of the good life. But so

it always is when thoughts of self come between one and his God. Luke iv. 14-30.

Picture, Jesus teaching in the Synagogue, — Bida. (Perry Pictures, 3279.)

## VIII. JESUS CHOOSING HIS FRIENDS

What was it about Jesus that made the fishermen and others want to follow him and to be with him? See the picture which shows the eager faces of those listening to Jesus. When they were with him they saw the beauty of the good life and were stronger to live it. So he made citizens of the good life out of those who were to go on with their duties and stay in the world and live as children of an heavenly Father.

Learn some of their names. Matthew x. 2-4.

The good news as Jesus taught it was for common people who could appreciate its worth and put it to use. Would the rich young rulers or proud officers or puffed up scholars who thought only of self be attracted by it, or make good disciples? John i. 25-51; iii. 1-12.

Picture, Jesus and the Fishermen, — Zimmerman. (Perry Pictures, 1101.)

## IX. AT SCHOOL WITH JESUS AS TEACHER

Notice how many of the parables or stories told by Jesus are drawn from the things everyone knows about, yet they teach us the highest truths. Many of his most important and impressive lessons are those which speak of the grass, the lily, the mustard plant, the fig tree, the vine putting forth its tender leaves, the birds picking up their living, the farmer sowing his seed, the fisherman with his net, the shepherd seeking his lost sheep.

His stories are a fountain of refreshment for weary minds. And Galilee has become a land of romance for poet minds to dream about, since it was there Jesus led his group of friends to the home of the farmer and shepherd and fisherman, and in parables of the field and lake and mountain-side made them feel that the whole world was thus folded in the everlasting arms of love. Mark iv. 1, 2, 26-32; Matthew xiii. 24-52; vi. 5-15; Luke xi. 2-4.

Picture, Sermon on the Mount, — Hofmann. (Perry Pictures, 797 I.)

## X. THE STORY OF THE SOWER

Every child likes to have a "garden" and to watch the seeds grow. But when we think that our minds and souls are gardens too, and that seeds are being sown there continuously, we must think of the soil. Is ours (1) the careless mind, or (2) the weak will and faithless, or (3) the greedy and selfish nature, or (4) the attentive and earnest mind where good seeds grow?

Can you not have the children call up simple illustrations of what is meant by each of these? Is knowledge enough? must there not also be earnestness and loyalty? Mark iv. 1-20; Matthew xiii. 1-23.

Picture, Parable of the Sower, — H. L. Robert. (Wilde's Bible Pictures, 77.)

## XI. THE SICK MAN LET DOWN THROUGH THE ROOF

There are many cures told of Jesus. Jesus "went about doing good," — it was his mission in life. And those who try to be his followers should learn to be helpful too.

Have you never as a child gone to your mother with a bruise or a sore finger to have her kiss it and "make it well again"? Jesus had the same power. And over certain nervous and excited persons he had a wonderful influence. Some of these people thought that a devil had possession of them, like the belief in witches not long ago in New England, or that the disease was an evidence that they had done some dreadful sin at some time and must suffer for it. And when Jesus came by, so noble in his life, so simple in his trust in God's power and love, they feared no more and were made well because evil had gone out of their lives and goodness had come in.

So Jesus has been called the Friend of man and the Great Physician, and he is so still. It does us good if we only think of him and the good life.

The healing of his seamless dress  
Is by our beds of pain;  
We touch him in life's throng and press,  
And we are whole again. — WHITTIER.

Luke v. 17-26; Mark ii. 1-12.

Picture, Christ Healing the Man with the Palsy, — Bida. (Perry Pictures, 3272.)

## XII. THE WOMAN THAT WAS A SINNER

Jesus as the friend and helper of men would not neglect those who most needed help, the sick, and those who had fallen into sin. The outcasts of society would be most in need of sympathy and help. But while Jesus was "a friend to publicans and sinners," he was not a friend to the sin. He gave his sympathy to save the man from the sin. He reprov'd the sin but loved the sinner.

The story shows the saving power of love. Read Henry Drummond's "The Greatest Thing in the World," or in Canon Farrar's "Life of Christ," the chapter on *The Sinner and the Pharisee*. Also Mark xii. 28-34.

Explain the different customs of the country shown in the practice of washing the feet, wearing of sandals, and reclining at meals. Luke vii. 36-50.

Picture, Anointing the Feet of Jesus, — Hofmann. (Perry Pictures, 797 R.)

## XIII. THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN

In this story of two men saying their prayers in church Jesus praises the sinner. But it is not because of his sin but because of his sincerity and simple-heartedness. Is sincerity in worship so important? Is it not the one thing most important if one wishes to have his heart right with God? If one is not honest in his religion where can you expect honesty?

Consult a Bible Dictionary for facts about the Pharisees and the reasons for their opposition to the teaching of Jesus. Luke xviii. 9-14.

Picture, The Publican and the Pharisee, — Tissot.

## XIV. THE GOOD SAMARITAN

This story of the good Foreigner who was outside of the pale of the church as the Pharisees taught religion, shows that a religion of good deeds prompted by love is above all tests of creed or ritual or ecclesiastical requirement, and all people can

understand it. It rises to the supreme height of service, and partakes of the nature of God the Creator who is continually making His world, lifting better up to best, with the aid of best men as fellow-workers.

Are not all men brothers in the sight of God? In the home if one brother or sister is weaker than the rest, do not all the others help that one? Is not human helpfulness the great lesson in life? the one trait that the progress of the world shows to be most valuable? The world's helpers are given fame and all they hold most dear. "Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother," said Jesus. Mark iii. 35. And see what he says about the dignity of service, Mark x. 42-45; Luke x. 25-37.

Picture, *The Good Shepherd*, — Plockhorst. (Perry Pictures, 810.)

## XV. THE STORY OF THE MONEY

This is usually known as the parable of the talents, a talent being about \$1800 of our money. We use the word talent for any of our special gifts, natural or acquired. These traits or gifts must be put to use to be of any value. The fishes in the dark waters of Mammoth Cave have lost the use of their eyes; and a sick arm, tied up, soon loses its strength. Matthew xxv. 14-30. See also the similar parable of the pounds, Luke xix. 11-27.

Picture, *The Lost Piece of Money*, — Millais. (Perry Pictures, 937.)

## XVI. THE LOST SON

This is one of the master stories of the world. Have you ever heard the cry, "A child lost!" and seen the distress and commotion it makes in the neighborhood until the child is found again? In this case the boy was lost in sin. Was not that worse? How would the father and mother grieve for him; and how would they rejoice when he is restored to them! So God who is our Father and Mother is made sad when any of His children do wrong, and rejoices when we repent and are sorry and try to do right again.

The added touch of the good brother, who never did anything very bad, and who for that reason felt himself better than other

people and had lost all feelings of tenderness and sympathy for human frailties, brings the lesson home to us all. Which brother are we? Luke xv. which contains also the stories of the Lost Sheep, and the Lost Piece of Silver.

Picture, Prodigal Son, — Molitor. (Perry Pictures, 1100.)

## **XVII. THE GREAT BANQUET**

This is a story of the slighted invitation. Do we not neglect opportunities for light reasons? And an opportunity once rejected does not come again. So the Greeks represented opportunity as an old man with forelocks but bald behind so he could not be detained after he had once passed by.

Young people especially should take every opportunity offered them to improve themselves or to be of service to others. Reject no opportunity and then when the great opportunity comes you will be ready for that too.

Recall the stories of entertaining angels unawares, — but to do so one must be used to being a host. Let us keep mind and heart open to every appearance of truth or beauty or goodness to welcome it that we may grow into the life divine.

When we do a hard thing let us do it pleasantly, "with as smiling a face as may be," and not make it harder by our way of doing it; otherwise we shall be like the man who did not put on the wedding garment. Luke xiv. 12-24; Matthew xxii. 1-14.

Picture, Sir Galahad, — Watts. (Perry Pictures, 940.)

## **XVIII. JESUS SENDS OUT HIS FRIENDS TO PREACH**

Picture the friends going out, two and two, without stopping to make provision for the journey, confident that the people would welcome them because of the good news they brought. They were carpenters or fishermen or workers, brought up at some trade, like most of the men of their country, and while some of them may have had a fair education in the schools, all of them had been to school with Jesus in the big world learning to see worth everywhere. They were well suited to go out as bearers of the good news to their people.

We want others to have the good news because they are our brothers, and because the good news is the better for the telling. And it must be told to be appreciated.

This is the missionary spirit that sends the followers of Jesus into all the world to tell the good news to the whole creation. Matthew x.

Picture, "Peace be to this House," — Dobson. (Perry Pictures, 3170.)

## **XIX. WHY SIMON PETER WAS CALLED A ROCK**

Peter is named first in every list of the Apostles. He was a natural leader, strong and courageous, but with many contradictory elements in his character. He needed the steadying power of the faith of Jesus to make him like a rock upon which a church could be built.

For interesting facts about him consult a Bible Dictionary or Hall's Lessons on the Life of St. Paul (Unitarian Sunday-School Society), or look up the New Testament account of him.

If Peter did wrong it was because he was impulsive, but he was always sorry for his sin and ready to do better next time. So he constantly grew more firm for the right. "Whenever I look at Peter," said Luther, "my heart leaps for joy." Matthew xvi. 13-26; Mark xiv. 27-31, 66-72.

Picture, Denial of St. Peter, — G. Harrach. (Perry Pictures, 3250.)

## **XX. ZACCHEUS WHO CLIMBED A TREE**

Was it idle curiosity or a real desire to learn of Jesus that prompted Zaccheus to do what he did? Zaccheus was an out-cast in society, a hated publican, but to all such when they were seeking him or aiming to get higher in goodness, Jesus gave his first thought. Luke xix. 1-10.

Picture, Zaccheus.

## **XXI. JESUS ENTERING JERUSALEM**

Make the story so real that it explains the joy and enthusiasm. The events of this day are remembered in some churches as Palm Sunday. Matthew xxi. 1-11; xviii. 1-6.

Picture, Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, — Plockhorst. (Perry Pictures, 814.)

## XXII. IN THE TEMPLE AGAIN

Try to realize what the Temple meant to every loyal Jew as the expression of the intense religious and race spirit of the Hebrew people. Consult a Bible Dictionary or Edersheim, "The Temple," for a description of it. It is no wonder Jesus was roused to holy wrath. Do you think Jesus was too severe? Soft words do not always cure evils.

The quiet scene at the end of the story shows that he was angry at the wrong-doing rather than at the wrong-doers; and now could see the greatness of the poor widow's offering. Even small acts can be performed in a noble spirit. Matthew xxi. 12-16; Mark xii. 41-44.

Picture, The Widow's Mite, — Bida. (Perry Pictures, 3278.)

## XXIII. JUDAS WHO BETRAYED JESUS

The passover supper was their national religious festival. It was an occasion of solemn joy at any time, and on this occasion when the friends of Jesus could celebrate it together with him and in Jerusalem, it became a time to be long remembered; and much more so as Jesus, foreseeing the end that awaited him, turned it into a memorial of him to be cherished as often as they broke bread together. "This do in remembrance of me."

The question of each, "Is it I? Do you mean me?" shows how sincere they were in examining their own hearts. They did not accuse one another.

It is hard to account for the action of Judas in betraying his best friend. A Bible Dictionary will suggest several motives. When he realized what he had done his remorse was genuine.

Jesus met his death, even the cruel death his enemies meted out to him, in a way to make him "more than conqueror."

"Rest now in thy glory, noble founder. . . . A thousand times more living, a thousand times more loved, since thy death than during the days of thy pilgrimage here below, thou wilt become so completely the cornerstone of humanity that to tear thy name from this world would shake it to its foundation." — Renan. Mark xiv. 12-26, 43-65; xv. 1-39.

Picture, The Last Supper, — Zimmerman. (Perry Pictures, 1101 C.)



## XXIV. THE WALK TO EMMAUS

After the death of Jesus the disciples were scattered about and were sad of heart, but soon they were cheered and encouraged by the thought that Jesus was still with them, that life conquers death always and that goodness is stronger than hatred.

The beautiful story of the walk to Emmaus well shows the change that came to them. The sadness and gloom was broken by hope and changed to confidence and courage. Soon they were ready to go forth with new spirit to tell the good news of the life that triumphs over death. The grave has lost its terror. Our faith in immortality grows ever brighter because of that life. Luke xxiv. 13-35; Matthew xxviii.

Picture, Supper at Emmaus, — Rembrandt. (Perry Pictures, 725.)

## XXV. THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT

"There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." And where there is true religious feeling men look beneath external differences, and understand that the heart is one. Acts ii. 1-21, 37-47.

Picture, The Soul's Awakening, — Sant. (Perry Pictures, 3248.)

## XXVI. AT THE BEAUTIFUL GATE

Describe the beauty of the Temple. A strong contrast to the Beautiful Gate is the squalor of the lame beggar.

Peter and John were just beginning their work as apostles, a work from which they never turned back. Like Jesus they went about doing good.

The poor beggar expected alms. He received something better, a friend and healer. "What I have, that I give thee." The heart of the religion of Jesus is beginning to be expressed. In his spirit we, too, are to give what we have to help the world. Acts iii. 1-19; iv. 13-35.

Picture, Peter and John at the Beautiful Gate. (Perry Pictures, 3597.)

## XXVII. THE STONING OF STEPHEN

Stephen became the first martyr to the religion of Jesus. And the excuse the Jews had for killing him was not that he had

done some terrible deed but simply that he had said that religion is greater than temples and services. It is true still. And when attempts are made to-day to compel worship to follow book or creed or church, the spirit of Stephen is still needed. Acts vi. 8-15; vii. 1, 48-60.

Picture, Stephen Preaching and Before the Council. (Wilde's Bible Pictures, 396.)

## XXVIII. ON THE HOUSETOP

The lesson here is one of tolerance. Peter learned to overcome his deepest prejudices and to carry the good news to any who needed it. All people have the same red blood. And beneath all external distinctions of class or wealth or social position are the same human needs. And all men are one in the sight of God.

God of ages and of nations!  
Every race and every time  
Hath received thine inspirations,  
Glimpses of thy truth sublime.

SAMUEL LONGFELLOW.

Christianity is beginning to be carried beyond the narrow circle of the Jews. Acts x.

Picture, What Peter Saw on the Housetop.

## XXIX. HOW PETER GOT OUT OF PRISON

The hardships through which the early apostles went seem almost unbearable, but a strength from above sustained them and led them on. Acts xii. 1-19.

Picture, St. Peter in Prison, — Raphael. (Perry Pictures, 334.)

## XXX. THE LIGHT THAT PAUL SAW

In Paul we have one of the most extraordinary characters the world has ever seen. At first he was one of the worst enemies the followers of Jesus ever had, and he became later their great apostle in carrying the good news to the Gentile nations. Study his life in the book of Acts and in his Epistles to catch the spirit of his enthusiasm.

Paul had many hindrances and limitations but he rose above them all by the might of the Spirit and "lived by faith."

If both names, Saul and Paul, are used be careful that the children are not confused. Saul was his name as a Jew, Paul the name with which he went forth as an apostle. Acts viii. 1-3; ix. 1-31; II Corinthians xi. 16-30.

Picture, The Conversion of Paul, — Schnorr.

### XXXI. ON THE ROAD WITH PAUL

Paul carried the good news of the life of Jesus into almost every known city of his time. It was a way beset by dangers of every sort and attended by adventures of many kinds. But to Paul it was well worth while for the joy of the message he brought.

The stories given here are samples of many that might be given. Acts xiv. 8-20; xvi. 6-10, 25-40.

Picture, The People Worshipping the Apostles, — Schnorr.

### XXXII. THE GREAT BONFIRE

Ephesus was a large city, rich and wicked. A good encyclopædia will give information about it and about the magnificent temple there to the pagan goddess Diana. In such a city there was much for Paul to do, and he remained there three years.

The workers of miracles thrived by practising deceit and appealing to the superstition and fears of ignorant people. Paul "spoke the truth in love," and truth and love are stronger miracle-workers than any magic, and one does not need to cheat and lie and practise deceit to use them. So Paul succeeded. "If hero means sincere man," says Carlyle, "why may not every one of us be a hero?" Acts xi. 19-26; xix.

Picture, Burning the Books.

### XXXIII. PAUL SAYING GOOD-BYE

Paul made many friends. His letters show his love for many of them. He was as noble and loving as he was bold and courageous. No character in the Bible speaks so often of his friends or in such tender words. He was a man to love and to be loved. How fond then must have been the farewells with which his friends took leave of him as he was going to distant Jerusalem, and then to Rome, perhaps never to return. Acts xix. 21; xx.; xxi.; xxiii. 12-24; xxvi.

Picture, Paul Before Agrippa.

### XXXIV. SHIPWRECKED ON THE WAY TO ROME

The vivid and minute description of the dangers that attended Paul on his voyage to Rome make us sure that the account was written by one of the friends of Paul who went with him. Paul might have been set free from his chains if he had not appealed to Cæsar. But he wished to go to Rome to tell the good news there, and if he went as a prisoner he might have a chance to tell it to the Emperor himself and to those high in the power of state. "Love hopeth all things, endureth all things." Acts xxvii.; xxviii. 1-16, 30, 31.

Picture, St. Paul, — Raphael. (Perry Pictures, 343 N.)

### XXXV. WHO IS THE GREATEST?

Paul's chapter on Love as the greatest of all inspired Drummond's excellent book "The Greatest Thing in the World," which the teacher should know.

Paul frequently uses the figure of one running a race to show the earnestness with which one should pursue the good life, "A heavenly race demands thy zeal, and an immortal crown."

A simple description of the early method of fighting with armor may be necessary for an easy understanding of the armor chapter. 1 Corinthians xiii.; 1 John iv. 7-21; James iii. 1-12; 1 Corinthians ix. 24-27; Philipians iii. 13, 14; Ephesians vi. 10-17.

Picture, The Christ-Child, — Murillo. (Perry Pictures, 675 B.)

### XXXVI. THE DREAM THAT JOHN HAD

The people of the early times delighted in dreams and visions. And as a story intended to leave a definite impression, but without an attempt to explain or interpret all details, this dream with which the New Testament closes appeals to the imagination. The city of God is set up here among men and God lives with us, and the time is at hand. Revelations i. 10-20; iv. 1-8; xix. 6, 7, 11-16; xxi. 1-7; xxii. 10.

Picture, Star of Bethlehem — Piglhein. (Perry Pictures, 3550.)













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